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DESPATCHES AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

JOHN, SECOND EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

VOL. I.

Camden series. 2d ser. 2

The Despatches and Correspondence of John, Second Earl of Buckinghamshire, Ambassador to the Court of Catherine II. of Russia 1762–1765

EDITED FOR THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ADELAIDE D'ARCY COLLYER

VOL. I.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY
1900

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PREFACE

THE greater part of the papers of John Hobart, second Earl of Buckinghamshire, were found three years ago at Blickling, in Norfolk, in a cabinet where it seems probable they had lain undisturbed since they were docketed and put away by their owner at the end of the last century.

Already in 1874 the Historical Manuscript Commission briefly noticed in their first Report Lord Buckinghamshire's despatches from St. Petersburg, which, with two volumes of his private letters, are also at Blickling, in the possession of Constance, Marchioness of Lothian. But the newly found papers, which were not known to the Commission, make so important an addition to the Despatches, which have perhaps an unusual share of diplomatic reticence and formality, that it was felt a full publication of the whole might now be of value.[1]

The connection of the Hobart family with Blickling dates from 1606, when the ancient home of the Boleyns, then in possession of Sir Edward Clere, their representative in the female line, was bought by Sir Henry Hobart, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas to King James I.

This great lawyer, in whom were united, says a contemporary notice of him, 'an excellent eloquence, the *éclat* of ancestry, the acutest abilities, the most engaging sweetness associated with a

[1] The Papers referred to which are included in this edition are published at the instance of Lady Lothian, and with every assistance from her.

singular gravity,'[1] was the father of sixteen children, and thus did not fail to found a family whose branches have spread widely. Blickling was rebuilt by him after the noble fashion of those times, and has remained to this day in the possession of his descendants.[2]

During the constitutional struggle of the seventeenth century the Hobarts were as a family on the popular side. The son and grandson next in succession to the Lord Chief Justice were Commissioners at Norwich to carry out the ordinance for ejecting 'scandalous and ignorant ministers, and for sequestrating the estates of Papists and notorious malignants in the county of Norfolk.'[3] The fourth Baronet, Sir Henry, declared in favour of the Revolution which dethroned James II., and fought for William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne. His son, Sir John, supported the Hanoverian dynasty, and was created Lord Hobart and Earl of Buckinghamshire; while his daughter, Henrietta, having married Henry Howard, afterwards Earl of Suffolk, was, with her husband, among those who attached themselves to the Electoral Court during the lifetime of the Electress Sophia. It was at Marble Hill, the house of Lady Suffolk (the friend of Swift and Pope, of Horace Walpole and the Grenvilles), that her nephew, John, second Earl of Buckinghamshire, having early lost his mother, spent the greater part of his youth, and his accession to the Whig interest was thus assured both by tradition and connection. Under George II. he became a Privy Councillor, and held successively the posts of Comptroller of the King's Household and Lord of the Bedchamber; and when George Grenville was Secretary of State in the Ministry

[1] See Judge Jenkins's *Characters of Lord Coke and Lord Chief Justice Hobart.* Add. MS. 22,629, f. 225, British Museum.

[2] The second Earl of Buckinghamshire was the last of his descendants in the male line to own Blickling. The present owner is the representative of those of the second Earl's eldest daughter.

[3] See Husband's *Collections* from March 1642–December 1646, p. 13.

of Lord Bute, Lord Buckinghamshire was appointed on July 17, 1762, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. Petersburg. The main object of his mission was to conclude an alliance with Russia; and his own comments, in later years, upon his failure to do this are not without interest:

'If the old connection,' he wrote in 1780,[1] 'between the House of Austria and the Court of St. Petersburg could be renewed, and England, as formerly, stood the bond of that connection, the adventitious strength which Russia has obtained since the accession of the present Empress would enable such a union completely to check the restless ambition of France, backed by the insidious enmity of Frederic II. The idea of Russia never offers itself without my lamenting the economy of the English Treasury during the year 1764, as it rendered ineffectual a negotiation which, most honourable to me, would have proved materially useful to my country. It could not, indeed, but have given a different cast to every political transaction on which England since that time has been engaged.'

Lord Buckinghamshire's social success at St. Petersburg was sufficiently marked to induce Lord Shelburne on his return to offer him in October, 1766, the Embassy to Madrid, then a post of great importance. But he had so completely identified himself with the policy of George Grenville, of whom he was a warm personal friend, that he was not disposed to accept office under the Government which had superseded him, and the offer was at once refused.[2] In the following November he was among those Peers who supported Lord Temple and George Grenville's opposition to the dispensing and suspending prerogative of the Crown, which had been recently exercised on the occasion of the Bread Riots, when, Parliament having been prorogued very shortly before that time of stress, the King had by an Order in Council laid an embargo on the further

[1] To Lord George Germaine, July 8, 1780.

[2] Lord Buckinghamshire to George Grenville, October 9, 1766. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

exportation of corn. In the debate which followed upon the legality of this action Lord Buckinghamshire himself spoke on the side of the Opposition,[1] and it is probable that his dismissal from his post of Gentleman of the Bedchamber in the following November, which was entirely in accordance with George III.'s constant policy towards office-holders in Opposition, was the result of his action in this matter. Even in 1776 he was still so far out of favour with the King that his appointment to the Viceroyalty of Ireland was carried in opposition to the King's 'resolution not to accept him.' Lord Buckinghamshire was, in fact, not of the 'King's friends,' and he seems to have remained faithful through life to that section of the Old Whigs which reflected most nearly the policy of George Grenville. His rule in Ireland, during the troublous years which preceded Grattan's Parliament, has been somewhat severely criticised.[2] But it won him at least the distinction, in the words of Grattan, of having 'excited in his favour among the Irish people a passion approaching to love'; and the consequent loss of countenance which he suffered from the British Court proceeded, Grattan believed, not from his own failure, but from 'the alienation of the Court to the nation which flourished under him.'

After his return in 1781 he held no other appointment, and much of the leisure of his later years was spent in the embellishment of Blickling, where he has left many memorials of a fine taste.[3] He died there in 1793, and lies buried in a mausoleum which he had caused to be erected in the bosom of its woods.

ADELAIDE D'ARCY COLLYER.

[1] See Grenville, *Corresp.* iii. 341-343, 383, and *Annual Register for* 1767, p. 39 *et seq.*

[2] See Froude's *English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 223.

[3] His portrait by Gainsborough is at Blickling, in a room hung with tapestry which was given to him by the Empress Catherine II.

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I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I

THE year 1739 marks an epoch in the history of the diplomatic relations between England and Russia. It was at that period that the long estrangement which had existed between them since the quarrel of Peter the Great and George I. was terminated by negotiations which led to a definite treaty of alliance. It was then that it became the 'Northern System' of Great Britain to look upon the yet untried forces of Russia as a possible counterpoise to the preponderance of France, who, from her intrigues in Sweden and the Empire, her rivalry in our eastern and western colonies, and finally her secret alliance with Spain, was become a serious danger both to England and Hanover upon the Continent. In the Empire she had, by a system of subsidies among the minor States, acquired an influence which seemed to threaten that of Austria herself. In the North, she was aiming at the confederation of Denmark and Sweden against the power of Russia and Austria, whose long alliance it was her interest to dissolve.[1] Her subsidies to Sweden, by which she held almost undivided sway in that distracted and impoverished kingdom, were a standing

[1] The alliance between Russia and Austria dates from the Treaty of Vienna (1726), when Catherine I. purchased the support of Austria for her son-in-law, the Duke of Holstein, by her guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction.

menace both to our Baltic trade and to the safety of Hanover. And thus the Hanoverian Kings of England were not behindhand with their subjects in a hearty hatred and fear of France, whose ambition was as much a danger to the Electorate as to the colonial empire of Great Britain.

The effect of this new French policy, the details of which belong to the diplomatic history of Southern Europe, was to produce a fundamental change in the policy of England towards Russia. In her the Government of George II. began to see an ally whose interests were opposed at every turn to those of France. In the long struggle with Austria, which had for more than a century been the basis of the whole system of her diplomacy, France had long sought to make a barrier against the encroachments of her enemy by a system of alliances with the minor States of the North.[1] Sweden, the natural opponent of Austria in the Diet of the Empire and the chief of the Protestant party as opposed to the Austrian Catholics, had been subsidised by France since the victories of Gustavus Adolphus had made his kingdom a power in Europe. Poland and Turkey had been supported and strengthened by her against their border foe. These Powers were in truth the 'natural allies' of France, for the greater part of her commercial prosperity depended upon her trade in the Levant; and the Porte was besides so formidable an enemy to Austria upon her southern border that the Most Christian King, though his religion had never allowed him to ally himself formally with an infidel, had constantly found his interests coincide with those of the Turks. Poland was less directly useful to the French system, but it was of the first importance that, lying as she did in the very centre of the contending interests of the two Powers, Austria should not have the chief voice in her divided counsels. But in all these States, which France had aimed at using as a

[1] For the detailed history of the relations of France with these three States, see *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs : Russie*, i. Introduction, pp. v. and xi. *et seq.*

barrier against Austria, it was inevitable that she should come into collision with Russia. For it was to the interest of Russia as well as of Austria to hold Turkey at bay, and to drive her from her outposts upon the Danube and the Black Sea. It was the object of Russia as well as of Austria to lessen the power of Sweden in the Empire and upon the Baltic, and to retain Poland as their ally and barrier against the Turk. Thus in almost every case it was the policy of Russia to weaken the allies of France, and to become everywhere, as the Duc de Choiseul called her later, 'the enemy of the friends of France and the friend of her foes.'

The English Government were therefore by this time fully convinced that if they were to combat successfully the influence of France in the North, it was to Russia they must look for an ally, and in 1738 the signs of a possible reconciliation between the two Powers who had hitherto been so divided quickened the desire of England for a Russian alliance. In that year a Russian ambassador was once more despatched to Versailles, and in 1739 M. de la Chétardie was accredited to St. Petersburg. These events were immediately followed by a proposal on the part of the Government of George II. for a defensive alliance with Russia.[1]

Henceforth the desire to make terms with Russia is marked in the instructions given to the ambassadors,[2] who were now regularly despatched from the Court of London to that of St. Petersburg. 'The liberties and security of England depend upon the balance of power, which is endangered by the ambition and intrigues of France. There is no other Power in Europe which can be of so much use to us as Russia.' These are the considerations which are impressed upon Mr. Finch, who in 1740

[1] Harrington to Rondeau, February 17, 1739, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 32. See for this 'Notes on the Diplomatic Correspondence between England and Russia in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century,' in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, N. S. vol. xiv.

[2] See, *inter alia*, Newcastle's despatch of June 23, 1741, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 37.

was despatched as Envoy Extraordinary to St. Petersburg. He is to convince the Russian Court that Russia as well as England has everything to fear from France, who was intriguing in Denmark and Sweden to induce those Powers to combine against her. She was tempting Sweden with a promise of Livonia, and Prussia with Courland, and was besides, no doubt, the author of the treaty about to be concluded between Turkey and Sweden.[1] If Austria, already shaken by the Polish war, should be further enfeebled by the desertion of Russia, the balance of power in Europe would be seriously endangered. The remedy proposed was an Anglo-Russian alliance, combined with common action in the affairs of Sweden, which might outbid the subsidies and outwit the influence of France.[2]

At that period the rule of the descendants of the elder brother of Peter the Great, who had at first shared his throne, was becoming hateful to the Russian nation on account of the foreign connections in which their marriages with the Princes of the Empire had involved the Government. The Regent, Duchess of Brunswick, a daughter of the Duke of Mecklenburg, was in truth a German, in spite of her half-Russian descent, and so too was her infant son, the Czar Ivan. By November 1741 Finch was describing the formation of a 'Russian party' and the growing ambition of the Princess Elizabeth, who had hitherto lived in apparent indifference to politics and absorbed in a life of ignoble dissipation and pleasure. Through all this, however, she had preserved a great influence by her beauty and popular manners, and more especially among the men and officers of the Preobrasinsky Guards. To their barracks she drove on the morning of November 26, 1741, accompanied by Michael Woronzow, afterwards Grand Chancellor under Catherine II., and by M. de Lestocq, her French physician. At the

[1] That concluded at Constantinople, July 1740, through the mediation of the French ambassador (see *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs: Russie*, i. 375 and ii. 572).

[2] Instructions to Finch, R.O. *Russia*, February 29, 1740, vol. 33.

head of 300 Grenadiers she rode to the Royal Palace, seized upon Ivan and his infant sister in their cradles, took prisoner the Duke of Brunswick and his Regent Duchess, arrested Münnich and Ostermann, and once more a Russian princess of the blood of Peter the Great was established upon the throne of Russia.[1]

The downfall of the Brunswick family was complete. So too was that of the German Ministers who had supported their *régime*. The Regent Anne, her husband, and the poor dethroned baby, whom Finch had described as 'one of the most beautiful children he ever saw, and as healthy as a farmer's child,' were conducted to the frontier. At first it was intended to allow them to retire into Germany, but other counsels prevailed, and they were imprisoned, says Münnich,[2] first in the citadel of Riga, then at Dünnemunde, and finally at Kolmogori, in the desolate regions of the White Sea. Here the Princess Anne died, and the child Ivan, so long to be the innocent cat's-paw of conspiracy, and whose miserable end was in the sequel to be ascribed to Catherine II., was removed to Schlüsselburg on the Ladoga Lake, where, as he grew to manhood in a ceaseless captivity, he grew also to be a hopeless imbecile.

Finch further reports[3] that after a trial of infamous injustice Count Ostermann, Münnich, and Galowkin, with other German officials, were condemned to be broken on the wheel. Their sentence was, however, 'by the clemency of the Empress,' commuted to decapitation, and again, at the very moment when they were about to lay their heads upon the block, they were condemned instead to a perpetual exile.

[1] Finch's despatch, November 26, 1741. See *La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, p. 88.

[2] *Ebauche pour donner une idée de la Forme de Gouvernement en Russie.* Par le Maréchal Münnich. Extracts from this work are preserved in MS. among Lord Buckinghamshire's papers. It was printed at Copenhagen, in 1774, in French.

[3] February 19, 1742, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 40.

To these German officials of a German dynasty succeeded a Minister who had long been their colleague, but who had skilfully avoided being implicated in their ruin. Elizabeth needed a Minister who could rule, and her favourite Lestocq was utterly without knowledge of politics. It was he, however, who recommended Alexis Bestucheff-Rumin [1] to the Czarina as the fittest person to be at the head of foreign affairs at a moment when the interests of Russia seemed first seriously involved in the affairs of Southern Europe.

It is probable that Bestucheff was of English origin, but he had been in the service of Russia since 1717, and had learnt his trade of statesman under Peter the Great. By him he had been appointed Chamberlain to Anna, Duchess of Courland, who upon her accession to the Russian throne had made him her envoy to Hamburg and afterwards to Copenhagen. In 1740 he was recalled to Russia and made a member of the Privy Council, where his knowledge of foreign Courts and his undoubted political experience soon made him indispensable to Elizabeth.

In July 1744 he obtained the highest office of the State, that of Grand Chancellor, and henceforth the intrigues to obtain his suffrages or to bring about his ruin on the part of the foreign Powers who were aspiring to influence the Russian Court, sufficiently prove his power.

Among the many references to Bestucheff in contemporary history it is not easy to find any that give him a good word. Manstein calls him 'false, proud, avaricious, vindictive, debauched, and implacable towards those who crossed his path or offended his pride.' Rulhière speaks of his vigorous genius, but describes him as without morals, without culture, and entirely careless of his

[1] Alexis Petrovitch Bestucheff-Rumin, born at Moscow, 1693, died April 1766. Tooke derives his name from Best, and says he was of English or Scotch origin. His brother Michael, afterwards Field Marshal, was Peter the Great's envoy to London in 1720. See *Biographie Universelle, La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, and, for his last years, the *Buckinghamshire Papers*.

reputation. Frederic II., who claimed to be in possession of proofs that Bestucheff recommended the poisoning of a Russian Resident at Warsaw who was opposing his policy, says that 'M. de Bestucheff n'avait point de répugnance pour commettre des crimes, mais il ne voulait pas qu'on les sût.'

Even his foes, however—and it must be remembered that these are the testimonies of his bitterest political opponents—acknowledged that he was an astute and powerful Minister, and Simon Romanovitch Woronzow,[1] whose uncle, the Vice-Chancellor, was his rival both under Elizabeth and Catherine II., acknowledges that his system of foreign policy was favourable to the real interests of Russia and to her prestige among the nations.

This was the Minister with whom the diplomatists of Europe had to deal, when for the first time they became fully aroused to the importance of Russia in the Continental balance. It was at the period of Bestucheff's accession to power that France, who had been completely cut off from all diplomatic relations with Russia since the Russian alliance with Austria in 1726, was attempting to establish an influence at St. Petersburg by her support of the revolution which brought Elizabeth to the throne, in the hope that with the fall of the German dynasty the influence of Austria might be destroyed.

It was then that it became the first object of Frederic of Prussia to unite the army which he had just inherited from his father with the hordes of Russia, in alliance with whom he believed be might dominate Europe.

It was then, too, that the King of England, convinced of the need of supporting Austria in her struggle for existence, was eager to secure in that cause the formidable forces of Russia, as the only possible counterpoise to the ascendancy of France and Prussia.

[1] Simon Romanovitch Woronzow (d. 1805) was Russian ambassador to St. James's in 1763. His Memoirs have been published by the Russian Historical Society, but are only in part translated.

This, therefore, is the period of our more active diplomatic relations with Russia, of which a somewhat ineffectual treaty concluded in 1742 was the firstfruits.[1] That treaty was avowedly directed against the ascendency of French influence in the North. But it was soon to become apparent that the influence of France was not the most formidable which English diplomatists were called upon to counteract at St. Petersburg. Bestucheff was astute enough to be aware of the real hostility which lurked behind the recent support which the French Government had given to Elizabeth, and was from the first opposed to a French alliance. In 1744 any friendship between the two Powers was rendered impossible by the indiscretions of La Chétardie, the French ambassador, who, after having supplied Elizabeth with funds in support of her attempt upon the throne, and having lived on terms of familiar friendship with her, was now found guilty of certain unfortunate utterances insulting to her dignity and personal reputation, and was expelled with ignominy from St. Petersburg.[2] This incident, coupled with Bestucheff's persevering hostility, was the death-blow to French influence at St. Petersburg, and from 1748 until 1756 even formal diplomatic relations ceased between them. So far, therefore, the purpose of English diplomacy in Russia had been achieved.

It remained, however, an object of the first importance to the Government of George II. to secure the active interference of Russia in the struggle for supremacy which was now being waged between the Houses of Brandenburg and Hapsburg, and to that Elizabeth was in truth bound by the terms of her treaties both with England and Austria.[3] But it seemed that the Russian

[1] See 'Notes on the Diplomatic Correspondence between England and Russia during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century,' in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, N. S. vol. xiv., for details as to this treaty.

[2] *Ibid.* See also *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs : Russie*, i. 437 *et seq.*

[3] France's declaration of war against England in March 1744 was acknowledged by Elizabeth as a *casus fœderis*.

Government were inclined to 'hedge' as to their guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, until they should see which of the Great Powers intended to be faithful, and with whom it was most to their interest to keep faith. The treaty with Austria, it was true, was binding,[1] but, on the other hand, Prussia might be extremely useful in case of an attempt by Sweden to regain her provinces upon the Baltic, to the loss of which she had never reconciled herself.[2]

The remonstrances from St. Petersburg, therefore, on first hearing of Frederic of Prussia's invasion of Silesia in 1740, had been but feebly uttered, and Elizabeth herself received his offer of an alliance after her accession with favour, even, Mardefeld reports, 'with joy.'[3] Frederic, for his part, left no means untried to turn the balance in his favour, and to obtain an alliance which was an absolute necessity to him. The friendship of Russia was the first object of his diplomacy, because the perils of every war in which he might engage were a thousandfold increased unless he were safe from her attacks upon his rear. In the very first week of his reign he opened negotiations with the Czarina Anna, and henceforth every change in the Government of Russia was to be the occasion of fresh bribes on the part of the King of Prussia.

From this time, therefore, whether it were to frustrate his schemes or to further his interests, whether to foil his ambition in the War of the Austrian Succession or to support him in the struggle which succeeded it, it is Frederic the Great who becomes the subject of almost every negotiation between the Courts of England and Russia.

The King of England, from the first uneasily suspicious of his nephew of Prussia, whose immense armies were a constant menace to Hanover, was specially jealous, and not without reason, of his powers of persuasion upon the Court of Russia; for so long

[1] See p. 3, note.

[2] Wych's despatch, June 24, 1742, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 40. See also Appendix A, p. 5.

[3] Mardefeld to Frederic, March 4, 1742, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vol. ii.

as Prussia was allied with France the accession of Russia to such a coalition must have decided the fate of the House of Hapsburg, and have been a perpetual menace to the peace of Europe. 'That torrent of violence and iniquity threatens the whole of Europe,' wrote Trevor from The Hague, whilst Hyndford at St. Petersburg was pointing out that 'it was certainly as much the business of that country as of England to crush that bitter and perfidious prince.' In truth, Frederic had determined at all costs to gain Russia, and he was not scrupulous as to the means which he employed. 'Faire entrer un âne chargé d'or à Pétersbourg,' he writes in November, 1740, 'n'est pas une affaire impossible,' and he was cynically certain of the success of such arguments upon the Ministers of the Regency which succeeded upon the death of Anna. Biren [1] was offered the guarantee of his Duchy of Courland, which he held upon a very uncertain tenure; and when Biren fell, Münnich [2] was promised some of the lands which Frederic had

[1] John Ernest de Biren, whose grandfather was groom to the Dukes of Courland. He himself served first in their armies, and afterwards, while in the service of Bestucheff (father to the Grand Chancellor), rose to be Gentleman of the Chamber to Anna, then Duchess of Courland. The Russian nobility would have excluded him from Russia, on Anna's accession to the throne, but he followed her to St. Petersburg, and, under her favour, attained to a despotic authority in the country. In 1737 Anna forced the Courlanders to elect him as their Duke. For one month he was Regent of Russia, and for twenty years an exile in Siberia. His fortunes, after his return from exile in 1762, may be followed in the *Buckinghamshire Papers*. See *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*; *Annual Register*, vol. xiii. p. 27.

[2] Burchard Christophe Münnich (b. 1683) was a native of Oldenburg. He served under Prince Eugène in Italy and Flanders, and was in the service of Poland during the great Northern War. In 1721 he offered his services to Peter the Great, and was employed by him in his great canal works at Ladoga. In 1734 he commanded the army which 'pacified' Poland and forced her to accept the Elector of Saxony as her King. He fought many brilliant campaigns against the Turks, and was concerned in almost every political event of importance in Russia during the reigns of Peter's successors. Anna made him her Field Marshal, Elizabeth exiled him, and Peter III. recalled him from exile. He survived to serve Catherine, having done what he could to save Peter III. from his fate. See Halem, 'Vie de Münnich,' *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle*. See also *Buckinghamshire Papers*, p. 3.

been ready to guarantee to Biren. It was by Münnich's influence that he concluded, in December 1740, his first treaty with Russia, of which the most significant article, so far as Frederic was concerned, was contained in the undertaking that Russia would '*guard his back.*'[1] The revolution, however, which brought Elizabeth to the throne, once more destroyed his hopes. The Brunswick family fell, Münnich was exiled, and Frederic must devise new means of gaining their successors. It was now Elizabeth's turn to be flattered and cajoled, and if her Chancellor Bestucheff was not to be won, he must be disgraced and ruined.[2] Bestucheff, however, seems to have had hopes at that time of persuading Frederic to take an active part in the war which Russia was then waging with Sweden, by seizing upon Pomerania, and thus driving the Swedes entirely out of the Empire. Thus in March 1743, in the interval of peace which followed upon the Treaty of Breslau, Frederic obtained another treaty with Russia, and this time by the influence of Bestucheff.[3]

So long, however, as the friendly relations between Russia and Austria remained unshaken, both treaties were, as Frederic was well aware, but empty words, and he was soon engaged in forging other links in the chain by which to bind Russia more securely to his alliance. 'Quand nous serons bien cramponnés à Pétersbourg,' he writes, 'nous pourrons parler bien haut en Europe.'[4] This is the perpetual burden of his correspondence with Mardefeld, his ambassador at St. Petersburg; and, fortunately for his interests, an event occurred in August 1743 which seemed likely to put an end to Elizabeth's vacillation, and to seriously threaten the alliance so long existing between Russia and Austria. A palace conspiracy,

[1] Frederic to Mardefeld, October 16, 1740, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vol. i.

[2] To Mardefeld, June 7, July 24, August 6, November 6, and December 3 and 6, 1740, &c. See for all these early negotiations with Russia, vol. i. of *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Zweiten.*

[3] See *Système de Bestucheff*, Appendix A, 5. See also Mardefeld to Frederic, February 5, March 27, 1743, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vol. ii.

[4] Frederic to Podevils, August 21, 1743, *ibid.*

which aimed at deposing Elizabeth and restoring the child Ivan of Brunswick to the throne of Russia, broke out in St. Petersburg, and in this the Austrian ambassador, the Marquis de Botto-Adorno, was seriously compromised, while even the English ambassador did not escape suspicion.

Frederic henceforth had a pretext for perpetually pointing out to Elizabeth how much it was to the interest both of England and Austria to bring about the restoration of the Brunswick family, who were so closely allied to the Empress Queen and to the King of England. Again and again he assures her that she must consult her own safety by sending Ivan to Siberia. He omits on this occasion to refer to his own close connection with the Brunswick family, of which he had made a skilful use during the Regency of the Duchess of Brunswick, and the pity which he had not failed to express for their exile is entirely forgotten in the generous care with which he would now guard the sacred person of Elizabeth.[1]

His hopes meanwhile of a permanent alliance with Russia were favoured by Elizabeth's choice of a successor. In the first year of her reign Elizabeth had espoused the cause of the family whose representative was now the only direct descendant of her father. She had acknowledged Charles Peter Ulrich, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, as her heir. Moreover, by the Treaty of Abo, which in 1743 terminated her war with Sweden, she imposed the condition that Adolphus Frederic, Duke Administrator of Holstein and Bishop of Lubeck, should be recognised as Prince Successor to the Swedish throne.[2] Thus in the near future it appeared that

[1] Fred. to Mardefeld, August 20, 1743, January 5 and 26, 1744, &c. (*Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vols. ii. and iii.).

[2] By the marriage of Hedwig, elder sister of Charles XII., with Frederic, fourth Duke of Holstein-Gottorp and Schleswig, whom Charles had destined to be his heirs, the House of Holstein had become first in the direct line of succession to the throne of Sweden; and the marriage of Frederic I. and Ulrica, younger sister to Charles XII., having been childless, the Swedish States offered their crown to Peter, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, who had, however, ten days before accepted the

Russia and Sweden were both to be ruled by monarchs of that same House whose annals had hitherto been so unfortunate, but whose fortunes, now become involved with those of the reigning families of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, were once more to exercise a powerful influence upon the diplomatic relations of the Northern Powers with the rest of Europe.

The question of the election to the Swedish throne and of a voice in her domestic affairs became a matter, therefore, in which such Courts as aimed at influencing the policy of Russia were eagerly concerned. By France, whose policy it was to preserve the Balance of the North by detaching from Russia the Scandinavian Powers,[1] whom she desired to keep in her own dependence, the union of Russia and Sweden was viewed with real apprehension, for their rivalry had hitherto been the safeguard against the interference of Russia in European affairs; whilst to England, on the contrary, such a union was less alarming than that of Denmark and Sweden, whose subservience to France made them a perpetual menace both to the Baltic trade and the safety of Hanover.[2] George II. therefore was disposed to act with Russia in the matter of the Swedish succession, as soon as the treaty of 1742 had secured her alliance with himself. The English ambassador at St. Petersburg, indeed, had declared it to be impossible to conclude that treaty without some promise of English concurrence in the Czarina's views for the House of Holstein,[3] and thus the English Government, of which Carteret was then the moving

succession to the throne of Russia, and, having become a member of the Greek Church, had become disqualified for the Swedish throne, which, it is said, he would have preferred. It must be remembered that the Swedish custom was to elect their monarchs from members of the Royal House. (See Wych's despatches, December 1742, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 42. See also *Annual Register*, xv. 50, 51.)

[1] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, i. 375.

[2] Carteret's correspondence with Wych, June 13, 1743 (British Museum Add. MS. 22,528).

[3] Wych's despatch, November 17, 1742 *et seq.* (R.O. *Russia*, vol. 42).

spirit, whilst declining to interfere actively in the election, did not refuse an informal support of the Russian candidate to the Swedish throne.[1]

In truth it was to the interest both of Russia and England to oppose the influence of France in Sweden, which at this time was well-nigh supreme. That unfortunate country had been plunged into such abject poverty by the devastating wars of Charles XII. that she was dependent for her very existence upon the subsidies which she received from France. She had besides been made peculiarly open to the influence of foreign Powers upon her domestic affairs by the Constitution of 1720, which the Senate had been able to impose upon the successor of Charles XII. The people of Sweden, wearied by the sufferings which the wars of that despotic hero had entailed upon them, had then allowed the Senate to assume powers so excessive that they were inconsistent even with the freedom of a republic.[2] The King was rendered almost helpless in their hands, and with every year his power tended to grow less.[3] This state of things the French Government at that time believed it to be to their interest to perpetuate,[4] because each member of the Senate—which consisted only of sixteen—might be bribed by a permanent pension, and thus be entirely under their control. A strong party therefore, backed by French gold, was perpetually advocating a French alliance. It has been calculated that from France more than fifty millions of

[1] George II. had at first been disposed to support the candidature of his son-in-law, Prince Frederic William of Hesse-Cassel. Carteret to Wych, November 17, 1742 (R.O. *Russia*, vol. 42). See also 'Secret Instructions to Lord Tyrawley,' December 17, 1743 (British Museum Add. MS. 22,528).

[2] See Annual Register for 1772, p. 50.

[3] Horace Walpole writes to Townsend, October 24, 1725, that 'the King of Sweden was overwhelmed, without a penny to himself' (*Newcastle Papers*, MS. 32,744); and Tyrawley writes, in December 1744, that 'the Swedes are so distrest that they would give their troops to the very Devil for money' (R.O. *Russia*, vol. 46).

[4] See 'Retrospect of French Policy towards Sweden,' by Duc de Choiseul, April 22, 1766 (*Flassan*, vol. vi.).

livres passed into Sweden between the years 1738 and 1764;[1] nor could any Diet be assembled or foreign negotiation carried without a plentiful expenditure of money on the part of those Powers who believed it to be to their interest to command the alliance or the neutrality of Sweden. During the sitting of the Diet the English party, the Russian party, the French party, vied in their efforts to secure by bribery the passing of such measures as seemed likely to conduce to their several interests, and the eagerness with which these objects were pursued would seem to be out of all proportion to the good to be gained by the alliance of a Power so weakened by war and internal anarchy, were it not apparent that the true object of both France and England in these negotiations was in truth not Sweden, but Russia.

It was by the promise of support to Russian interests in Sweden, and of a fleet in the Baltic against her threatened inroads, that England obtained the treaty with Russia in 1742. It was by her alliance with Sweden that France hoped to render neutral the power of Russia in Northern Europe. It was on the condition that Sweden should be driven from the Empire that Frederic II. obtained his second treaty with Russia in 1743; and thus Sweden, weakened and convulsed with internal disorder, was yet a factor to be reckoned with in the affairs of Europe.

Through Sweden, therefore, Frederic aimed at influencing that Power whose friendship was so necessary to him. And no sooner had the Duke Administrator of Holstein been actually elected to the throne than the King of Prussia, in concert with France, offered his support to that Prince as a condition of a Quadruple Alliance with Sweden and Russia. The Duke of Holstein was to be reinstated in his province of Schleswig, for which he was perpetually clamouring—or, if possible, should be persuaded to accept Bremen and Verden in its stead, in which case Denmark might be allowed to keep Schleswig. Thus the Elector of Hanover's treasured possessions were to be wrested from him, and to be used as a convenient

[1] Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, xiii. 337, note.

sop to satisfy the conflicting claims of the Northern Powers.[1] The treaty was to be further strengthened by the marriage of the Prince Successor of Sweden with the sister of Frederic of Prussia, and so far only did it become effectual. For the interests of France and Russia were too entirely opposed to admit of an alliance, and the hollowness of French protestations was to be revealed in 1744, as we have seen, by the treachery of the French ambassador. But the marriage of Louise Ulrique of Prussia with the future King of Sweden promised to secure to Frederic the means of influencing that country, while it made another link in the chain with which he hoped to bind to his interests the heir to the Russian throne.

In November 1742, Peter Ulrich, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, had been baptised into the Greek Church and proclaimed Grand Duke by ukase. Soon it was a question of his marriage, and this had been Frederic's opportunity. By judicious management the future Empress of Russia might, in some degree, be in his dependence, and might owe her elevation to his bounty. To this end he hinted to Elizabeth [2] how essential it was, if she wished to retain her power over her nephew, that he should not marry a princess of too powerful a House, for that would be perpetually giving occasion for interference in Russian affairs. The Princess whom he fixed upon as most likely to further his cause was Sophie Frédérique, the daughter of a Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, who held a command in the Prussian army, and whose wife was sister to the Prince Successor of Sweden. By Frederic's contrivance the Princess's portrait was painted during a visit she paid to Berlin, and it was sent for the inspection of the Czarina. So attentive was he to every detail of any scheme which he had at heart that we find him suggesting to her mother that the Princess, who had been simply brought up in

[1] See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, i. 406–446. Instructions to La Chétardie, September 1743, and to St. Séverin, November 29, 1744. See also Carteret to Tyrawley, January–April 1744 (British Museum Add. MS. 22,528).

[2] Fred. to Mardefeld, December 2, 1743, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Zweiten*, vol. ii.

the little homely German Court, should be taught *la haute danse* in preparation for her splendid future. In February 1744 his schemes were so far successful that the Princess and her mother were established at St. Petersburg, where they had been received in all splendour by the Empress, and were soon high in favour both with her and the Grand Duke. Frederic, of course, hoped to find in the two Princesses a convenient channel for influencing the Russian Court,[1] and the Princess's mother was accordingly soon deep in the schemes of Mardefeld and La Chétardie,[2] and in those secret negotiations for the proposed Quadruple Alliance of the North which were rendered abortive by Bestucheff's opposition to a French alliance, and by his discovery in June 1744 of the treachery of the French ambassador.

But with the fall of the French influence at St. Petersburg that of Frederic, who had now once more allied himself with France,[3] was to suffer a severe check. The complicity of Mardefeld with La Chétardie's schemes had been revealed by Bestucheff, and that Minister, whose power was greatly increased by his triumph over the French faction, had now definitely declared his hostility for the King of Prussia.

The grounds of this hostility may be traced in detail in the *Système Politique*[4] which Bestucheff, in the early part of 1745, addressed to the Czarina Elizabeth. This memorial is in fact an impeachment of the King of Prussia, a recital in detail of his greed and ambition, and of the necessity that was laid upon Elizabeth to take active steps to frustrate his designs and to save Austria from dismemberment. For all this the Chancellor shows good cause, but it is not without significance that Frederic, aware that Bestucheff was not a personal favourite with the Czarina, and

[1] Fred. to Mardefeld, January 14, 1744, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Zweiten.*

[2] See Carteret's correspondence with Lord Tyrawley, April 1744 (British Museum Add. MS. 22,528).

[3] In June 1744. Mardefeld on this at once openly declared against the English

[4] A copy of this is in MS. among the papers of the Earl of Buckinghamshire, and I have not been able to find it elsewhere. See Appendix, note A, p. 1.

believing that his fall was near, had omitted to pay him the sum of money which he had promised on the occasion of the signature of the treaty of 1743.[1] Nor were personal motives entirely absent from the enmity with which Elizabeth herself at this time began to regard the King of Prussia. Sometime about the year 1744 she suffered a rude awakening as to Frederic's professed admiration and attachment for her person. Wearied of her vacillations, he suffered himself to speak of her conduct and character with the most contemptuous disrespect, and Elizabeth immediately discovered that 'he was a Prince who never went to church, who had not the fear of God before his eyes, and who mocked at all holy things.'

The fate of Frederic's negotiations at St. Petersburg was thus sealed, and the English Government was not slow to avail themselves of the new development in the policy of Russia, to which it is possible they had themselves contributed. In September 1742 Carteret had impressed upon the English ambassador at St. Petersburg the profound distrust with which both England and France at that time regarded Frederic. 'If Russia shares those views,' he adds, 'do not attempt to dissuade her. We are *not* attached to the King of Prussia.' When the Treaty of Breslau was broken, and Frederic's renewed alliance with France was made on the condition that Hanover should be invaded, and vigorous war, both by sea and land, should be made against England,[2] Carteret's attempts to arouse the Czarina to a sense of her danger from Frederic's ambition became strenuously emphatic, and there is abundant evidence in his correspondence with Lord Tyrawley that both Master and Minister were, for a time at least, involved in Bestucheff's schemes for the dismemberment of Prussia.[3] 'Berlin

[1] See *La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, pp. 119, 120.

[2] See Frederic to Rothenberg, February 1744, and March 16, 1744, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vol. iii. p. 43 *et seq.*

[3] Carteret to Tyrawley, November 9, 1744 (R.O. *Russia*, vol. 46). See also Harrington's despatches of December 11, 1744, and January 8, 15, 18, 1745 (*ibid.* vols. 46 and 47).

was to be intimidated by Russia,'[1] was then the keynote of Carteret's Continental policy. Nor did his fall in 1744 materially affect the policy of the English Government. In 1746 Bestucheff, backed by English gold,[2] and goaded by his own fears of the intrigues of France and Prussia, was enabled to make a fresh treaty with the Empress Queen, and this was followed in 1747 by a convention with England, who, in return for a promise of Russian troops to be stationed in Livonia and Russian galleys in the Baltic, agreed to pay annually the sum of 100,000*l.* to the Czarina Elizabeth.[3]

There is little doubt that this measure, unpopular as it was with the English nation as a part of the Hanoverian policy of George II., and from the lavish expenditure of public money which it involved, did much to secure the object of George II.'s Continental policy. The King of Prussia had shown so persistent a dread of Russia as a hostile force upon his rear that he was not likely to invade Hanover so long as that Power was influenced by the subsidies of England. The tardy fulfilment of the conditions of the Anglo-Russian treaty hastened also the conclusion of the War of the Austrian Succession, for the march of the hordes of Russia upon the provinces of the Rhine was so extraordinary an apparition that a preliminary convention stipulated for their withdrawal before the terms of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle should be discussed.[4]

II

That treaty, which in 1748 brought to an end the first great struggle between Frederic the Great and Maria Theresa, left almost every question which had been in dispute before the outbreak of the war still undecided. Austria was not dismembered,

[1] Carteret to Tyrawley, July 6, 1744, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 45.

[2] The two Bestucheffs were in receipt of pensions from George II. since 1742. See Carteret to Wych, June 1742 (R.O. *Russia*, vol. 40).

[3] See Belsham, *George II.* vol. ii. 167, and Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, ii. 409.

[4] Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, ii. 409, 418.

but she was weakened and depressed, and the peace of Europe was now as much menaced by the lightning growth of Prussia as ever it had been by the ascendency of France or of Austria. The King of England was still in terror for Hanover, and many burning questions in the colonies threatened war in the near future between France and England. Maria Theresa was by no means reconciled to the loss of Silesia, and the peace which had been in some measure forced upon her by the action of Great Britain had brought about a coldness between her and the King of England which in a few years was to lead to an open rupture.

While the storm was gathering, the King of England, perpetually mistrustful of Frederic of Prussia, and in growing uncertainty of the fidelity of the Empress Queen, was constant in his endeavours to strengthen the ties which bound him to Russia. In 1749 the instructions to the English ambassador[1] at St. Petersburg insist upon the perpetual necessity of counteracting French and Prussian influence there, by pointing out to Bestucheff the personal risk of ruin which he was under from their intrigues, and the danger with which Russia was threatened by their support of Sweden, and their endeavours to combine the Scandinavian Powers against her. In the next year England acceded to a treaty which had been concluded between Austria and Russia, though with the express exception of the secret articles, which, so far as those two Powers were concerned, were its main object. By the first of these Maria Theresa guaranteed Schleswig and the ducal parts of Holstein to the Duke of Holstein. By the second it was agreed that Silesia should be forfeited to Austria if Prussia should attack either Russia or Poland. The King of England was debarred by his previous guarantees to Denmark and Prussia from agreeing to either of these secret conditions. Yet he obtained a secret promise of Russian support in case of an attack upon Hanover,[2] and this was made doubly sure in 1753 by another subsidy from Great Britain. In 1757 the treaty of 1742

[1] Instructions to Guy Dickens, August 1749, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 60.

[2] Newcastle to Keith, October 17, 1749, *ibid.* See also Koch, ii. 397–403.

would expire, and, in the face of the dangers which were threatening England on all sides, it seemed imperatively necessary to renew it. But both Elizabeth and her Chancellor were in want of money,[1] and the demands of Russia were so excessive that nothing could be settled until 1755, when war with France was so imminent, and the danger of Prussian influence being renewed at St. Petersburg was so threatening,[2] that, in spite of much opposition at home, the sum offered for Russian troops rose in a short time from 300,000*l.* to 500,000*l.*, while the annual subsidy to be paid by Great Britain, in time of peace, before the troops should be on the move, rose from 100,000*l.* to 150,000*l.*[3]

The support of Russia in the coming war seemed indeed necessary to Great Britain, for without it she must face upon the Continent the coalition of France, Prussia, and Sweden without a single ally powerful enough to divert the French from an attack upon Hanover, or from concentrating all their forces against her colonial possessions in India and North America. The convention, therefore, which was finally concluded with Russia in September 1755 was justified to the English Parliament, in spite of the immense expenditure it involved, as a measure which tended to peace. It was, as Lord Holderness expressly told the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, mainly directed against the King of Prussia. Yet, strangely enough, it was at once communicated to him,[4] and with remarkable and perhaps not altogether unforeseen results. Frederic became immediately reconciled with Great Britain.

[1] Hanbury Williams reported that most of the annual subsidy went to the Czarina's private purse, and that she was building palaces with it.

[2] Lord Holderness warns the English ambassador at St. Petersburg with manifest alarm that the King of Prussia had succeeded in obtaining for his envoy an audience with the Czarina through the influence of Shouvalow. (Holderness to Guy Dickens, *Buckinghamshire Papers*, October 22 and November 5, 1754.)

[3] Holderness to Dickens, November 5, 1754; Holderness to Hanbury Williams, January 17, 1755. See also *Buckinghamshire Papers*, 'Negotiations concerning the Convention of 1755.'

[4] Holderness to Williams, December 26, 1755, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 70.

Some negotiations to this end had already passed in the preceding summer, when George II., in one of his expeditions to the safe vantage-ground of his Electorate, had despatched Lord Holderness to the Duke of Brunswick, through whose medium he had made proposals with a view to settling the disputes between himself and the King of Prussia. He asked that, for the sake of the peace of the Empire, Frederic should not oppose his defensive operations in Hanover, and should himself attack France if she should invade it. Frederic's response to this advance is a fine example of his statecraft. In a secret letter to the Duke of Brunswick he declared that he '*never would consent to give the required guarantee for Hanover.*' But openly the proposals were not entirely rejected, though his reply was both cold and cautious. This was on August 12. On September 1 he wrote once more to the Duke of Brunswick that he might give the English Minister hopes '*that it may be possible to arrive at what had been proposed for Hanover.*'

The explanation of this sudden change of tone is to be found in the fact that he had heard in the interval of the prospects of a Russian alliance with England, and the news had at once put a different face on the matter. He had begun to reflect that he would soon be free from his engagements with France, and that then other combinations might better suit his purpose.

His complete change of front with regard to the English alliance dates from the very day on which he had certain information that the Anglo-Russian alliance had actually been concluded.

In November 1755 the fact was officially communicated to him by Holderness, together with the King of England's offer to renew his guarantee of Silesia to Prussia, and to enter into a close alliance. This time Frederic met the advance with the most open graciousness, and thus was inaugurated that momentous reversal of alliances which signalised the outbreak of the Seven Years' War.[1]

[1] Historians have not been agreed as to which Power made the first advance in

The breach meanwhile between Austria and England had been slowly widening, and it was not possible that their alliance could survive that of England and Prussia, which was concluded at Westminster in January 1756. In the following May France and Austria, whose rivalries had shaken Europe for more than a hundred years, joined hands in a struggle in which, among the many issues at stake, they had but one aim in common—the desire to take vengeance upon the King of Prussia.

Nothing can be a more conclusive proof of the influence which Russia had acquired amongst the Courts of Europe, in the course of the last fifty years, than the fact that it was in truth the conclusion of her alliance with England in 1755 which had been the first link in the chain of those diplomatic developments by which the whole European system was reversed at the beginning of the Seven Years' War. It decided Frederic of Prussia to accept an English alliance; it drove Austria into the arms of France; and these fundamental changes in the alliances of Europe were in their turn to produce a change in the aspect of affairs at St. Petersburg. For it was not to be supposed that the alliance between England and Prussia would there be received without protest. Elizabeth's hatred for Frederic had but grown stronger with years, and her personal leanings had always been in favour of France. The treaty with Austria had still many years to run,[1] and of late the relations between the two Empresses had become more friendly through the mediation, it is said, of the English

these negotiations, and many explanations have been given of Frederic's desertion of the French alliance at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. I submit that a careful study of his correspondence proves that the true explanation was to be found in the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1755. (See for all these negotiations *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, vol. xi. 247 *et seq.* The Duke of Brunswick to Frederic, August 1, 1755; Frederic to the Duke of Brunswick, August 12 and September 1; Maltzahn to Frederic, August 29 and September 5; Michel to Frederic, August 15, 1755, etc.)

[1] It had been renewed in 1746 for twenty-five years. Koch, vol. ii. 397, 398.

ambassador himself.[1] Bestucheff was still the enemy of the King of Prussia, and to all appearance Bestucheff was still supreme.

The English Government had, indeed, attempted an impossible feat. They were hoping to retain the alliance of Russia, as well as of Prussia, at a time when Frederic was the bitterest personal foe of both Minister and mistress. Seldom has so complete a *volte-face* been expected of any diplomatist as that which had to be executed by the unfortunate Minister who had negotiated the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1755. This was Sir Charles Hanbury Williams,[2] the brilliant *roué* and poetaster, the friend of the Walpoles and of Henry Fox, who had been able, by dint of considerable address and personal charm, to conclude the wished-for alliance with Russia six weeks after his arrival at St. Petersburg. The treaty had no sooner been ratified than the news of the proposed treaty with Prussia was communicated to him,[3] and he was called upon to make the best of it. He was directed to point out that Prussia without France could never be a danger to Russia, and that therefore England had not really departed from her ancient system, the bond of her alliance with Russia having been their common opposition to France. A powerful ally had now been detached from France, and this must be directly beneficial both to Russia and Austria.

[1] See the works of Hanbury Williams, annotated by Horace Walpole (Introduction).

[2] Sir Charles Hanbury Williams was attached to the Saxon Court in 1754, and went to Warsaw in attendance on the Elector of Saxony. Here he allied himself with the Czartoriski and Poniatowski faction, which made him specially obnoxious to the French party, who were then intriguing to get the Prince de Conti recognised as the successor to the throne. From Warsaw he went to St. Petersburg, where he successfully concluded the treaty of 1755. The influence he acquired over the Grand Duchess is incontestable. M. de l'Hôpital wrote that 'Mme. la Duchesse ne voit et n'entend que par lui et ses adhérents' (September 16, 1757). See his biography, attached to his works, edited by Horace Walpole; see also *Le Secret du Roi*, i. 49, par le Duc de Broglie.

[3] In December 1755. Holderness to Williams, *Lansdowne Papers*; Third Report of the Hist. MSS. Commission.

But Elizabeth was not to be won. She insisted that a declaration should be attached to the treaty she had but just ratified, to the effect that her stipulated help to England should hold good only in the case of an attack by Prussia.[1] This was in effect to render the treaty void, as Frederic at once perceived. But the English Government did not directly recognise their defeat. Hanbury Williams was ordered to return the secret declaration, and to act as if it did not exist,[2] and there was still a hope that the value of the subsidy would keep Russia to her bargain. It seems certain that Horace Walpole's belief that George II. was completely indifferent to the Russian treaty as soon as he had secured the King of Prussia is unfounded. Walpole, between his desire to make out a good case for Williams and to render the Government ridiculous, attributes some little coldness which the ambassador experienced, on first reporting his success to the King, to the latter's having ceased to think the treaty of the least importance. A slight delay did indeed occur in the English ratification, on account of a mistake which Williams had made in the order of the signatures, which seemed to give a handle to the Russian Government to claim precedence. But that the delay was not caused by the indifference of the English Government is proved by the whole tone of the despatches to Russia, as well as by the fact that in August of the same year a pension was promised and paid to Bestucheff, and the sum of 10,000*l.* granted to the Grand Duchess Catherine.[3]

In truth the situation was not hopeless. Prussia might yet be combined with England in a Russian alliance, for Elizabeth's health was seriously failing; her end seemed approaching; her successors might be won, and the counsels of her Ministers were divided. Frederic well knew how to approach his old enemy.

[1] Williams to Holderness, February 19, 1756, R.O. *Russia*, vol. 71.

[2] Holderness to Williams, March 30, and Williams, May 8, 1756, *ibid.*

[3] Williams to Holderness, July 9, and Holderness to Williams, August 6, 1756 (Historical MS. Report, *Lansdowne Papers*, vol. iii.).

Bestucheff, and Williams was quite ready to represent the King of Prussia's interests at St. Petersburg, where Frederic had now no accredited Minister. In September he was able to report that the Grand Chancellor had been 'gained to the King of Prussia,'[1] and among Lord Buckinghamshire's papers occurs a curious report of a conference in which Bestucheff posed in his new character of a supporter of the Anglo-Prussian alliance:—

Some of the Russian Ministers' Thoughts upon the Treaty with the King of Prussia.

Sur l'ordre que le Vice-Chancelier[2] a porté de la part de l'Impératrice au Grand Chancelier et au Collège des Affaires Etrangères, de dresser un avis sur les mesures à prendre par la Russie à l'occasion du traité avec la Prusse, le Grand Chancelier a fait un papier préliminaire indépendant du Collège, où il dit à l'Impératrice que quoiqu'il ne voye pas le traité de Prusse nuisible à la Russie, cependant pour obvier à tout, et pour jeter de la poudre aux yeux de l'Europe, il faudrait former un conseil de guerre extraordinaire dont la forme, les occupations et le placard d'institution composent toute la teneur de ce papier. L'Impératrice ne voulant point d'un nouvel établissement si solennel y a instituée ces conférences, qui continuent encor et à la première desquelles Wolkow a fait la lecture d'un papier que le Collège des Affaires Etrangères, composé du Vice-Ch, Olsufief,[3] Pugowisknikow et Goldbach, avait formé et que le Grand Chancelier avait apostillé en marge de la manière suivante: Dans le premier article il était dit expressément que le traité fait par le Roi d'Angleterre avec celui de Prusse étant directement contraire à celui que le Roi d'Angleterre avait fait avec la Russie, celle-ci n'était plus liée au sien, et que l'Impératrice devait par une déclaration en forme annoncer à l'Angleterre qu'elle se tient dégagée de tout ce qui est stipulé dans le dernier traité fait avec elle.

[1] Williams to Holderness, September 28, 1756, *ibid.*

[2] Michael Ilarionovitch Woronzow (1714–1767).

[3] Adam Vassilievitch Olsufief, Private Secretary to the Czarina, and later Secretary of State.

A côté de ceci le Grand Chancelier a écrit qu'il est en tout de de l'avis du Collège, excepté dans cet article; qu'il ne suffisait pas d'être de mauvaise humeur pour rompre un traité; qu'il faudrait pour rompre celui-ci que l'Angleterre fût contrevenue à la lettre de son traité avec la Russie, et qu'on se déshonorait aux yeux de l'univers en rompant des traités sans raison.

Un autre article du papier conseillait à l'Impératrice de parler à la Cour de Vienne le plus amicablement et le plus *ouvertement* que possible sur *tout ceci*. Le Grand Chancelier dans son apostille est fort de cet avis, pourvu que l'on décide premièrement *ce que c'est* qu'on doit donc dire *si ouvertement* à la Cour de Vienne.

A côté de l'article où le Collège souhaiterait qu'on envoyât un ambassadeur en France, quand ce ne serait que pour marquer le désir qu'on a d'être sur un pied de bonne intelligence avec la Cour de Versailles, quoiqu'on n'eût rien de particulier à traiter avec elle, le Grand Chancelier remarqua qu'on n'envoie pas ordinairement des ambassadeurs pour rien dire.

Cette manière ironique d'apostiller l'ouvrage du Collège au lieu de donner un avis en forme attira au Grand Chancelier les plus vives reprimandes de l'Impératrice, qui, après lui avait reproché à cette occasion tout ce qu'elle avait sur le cœur depuis longtems, et entre autres d'avoir empêché le comte de Gisors[1] de venir ici, finit enfin, après que le Vice-Chancelier et Michel Bestucheff eurent donné leurs votes aussi au Grand Chancelier, par lui demander quatre ou cinq fois de suite son avis, ce qu'il croyait donc devoir se faire par la Russie au sujet de ce traité de Prusse, et quelles étaient les raisons qu'il pouvait alléguer pour toute sa conduite. Le Grand Chancelier se (contenta) à dire qu'il ne pouvait pas parler tandis qu'il voyait qu'on était résolu de trouver mauvais tout ce qu'il disait, mais qu'il protestait contre la rupture du traité et contre l'ambassade en France.

Bouturlin dans cette conférence dit seulement: 'Vous souvenez-vous, madame, que je vous avais bien dit au conseil du mois de septembre que les Anglais vous tromperaient?'

Apraxin et Peter Shouvalow ont parlé pour le maintien du

[1] The Comte de Gisors was son to the Maréchal de Belle-Isle. It had been proposed by Woronzow to invite him to Russia as a kind of informal envoy from France, he being then in Sweden. As it appears, it was the King of France himself who would not permit this. See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 21.

traité. Alexandre Shouvalow n'a rien dit. Le Grand Duc[1] a parlé deux fois haut, et une troisième fois à demi-voix à son voisin Michel Bestucheff, pour le traité. Ces deux fois l'Impératrice lui a répondu comme s'il ne savait pas de quoi il parlait. Mais aucun de ceux qui ont assisté à cette conférence n'ont parlé à tour de rôle ou en forme de harangue, et on s'est levé sans conclusion.

How far Bestucheff was sincere in his adherence to Prussia it is not easy to decide, but he was at least sincere in his opposition to a French alliance, which fidelity to Austria must now probably entail upon Russia. The Grand Chancellor had no reason to forget the grudge which he owed against France, and at this moment his ascendency was once more threatened by French intrigue. He had never been a personal favourite with Elizabeth, and even his political influence was now more or less undermined by younger and more attractive favourites. The Cossack Rozamouski, whom it was believed Elizabeth had married, had been succeeded in her favour by Ivan Ivanovitch Shouvalow, a man who had absorbed French culture with more than the usual facility of the Russian, and had long been won to French interests.[2] In October 1755, almost at the very moment that the English treaty was concluded, a mysterious envoy, a Jacobite adventurer, known sometimes as Douglas, sometimes as Mackenzie, had succeeded in obtaining admittance to the Empress, and had attempted to appeal to her old affection for the French nation. With him Shouvalow and the Vice-Chancellor Woronzow were soon in close communication. The instructions[3] which Louis XV. gave to this informal envoy have been preserved, and are curious reading. The most profound secrecy was to be observed, for the French Government, having

[1] Peter, Duke of Holstein and Grand Duke of Russia.

[2] Ivan Ivanovitch Shouvalow, 1727–1797. He was the founder of the University of Moscow and of the Academy of Fine Arts. He afterwards passed some time in England and was a frequent guest at Strawberry Hill. See Walpole's 'George III.,' and *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle.*

[3] Of June 1, 1755. See *Le Secret du Roi*, par le Duc de Broglie, i. 445.

been for eight years without any ambassador, or even consul, in Russia, was in complete ignorance as to how any advance on their part would be received. Douglas was chosen because he was a Scotchman, 'his compatriots were so accustomed to travel that he would excite no surprise'; he was a subject as well as an enemy of the King of England; he was to travel without any credentials, and he was to transmit his news to Paris in terms of trade such as fur merchants use, and written in so small a character that the paper might be hidden in the double bottom of a tortoise-shell snuff-box.

Douglas's mission was to negotiate an alliance between France, Russia, and Austria,[1] and at all costs to prevent Russia from fulfilling her treaty with England.[2] After a time he was officially recognised as a French *chargé d'affaires*, and had the assistance in his mission of the Chevalier d'Eon.[3] Through the medium of this extraordinary person Louis XV. had long secretly corresponded with the Czarina Elizabeth, whose personal sympathy with France had thus been kept alive through all the years in which their Governments had been alienated. But, secret as Louis XV. knew how to keep his strange missions of diplomacy, Frederic of Prussia from the first knew of the arrival of Douglas at St. Petersburg, and it was he who warned the English ambassador in time to be on his guard against presenting him to the Czarina as an English subject, in which capacity he had been instructed to

[1] 'An Account of an Interview with Bestucheff,' in the *Buckinghamshire Papers*.

[2] Mitchell to Holderness, May 27, 1756. Mitchell to Williams, June 8 and 12, 1756. Mitchell reports that this man was probably one Mackenzie, who had been aide-de-camp to the Prince of Waldeck, and afterwards employed by the Dutch at Liége as a spy. He was a Roman Catholic, and probably of the Order of the Jesuits, though he did not wear their dress. (*Mitchell Papers*, Add. MS. 6,804, British Museum).

[3] Charles Geneviève Louise Auguste Eon de Beaumont, commonly called Le Chevalier d'Eon, born 1728 at Tonnerre. He was one of the earliest agents employed by Louis XV. in his secret diplomacy. He died in London in 1810. See *Biographie Universelle* and Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.* vol. i. p. 392.

report himself at the English Embassy.[1] He was known to be in the possession of large sums of money; but whatever may have been the means he employed, he was successful. A Jacobite was once more to be the medium of reconciliation between France and Russia. On December 31, 1756, Elizabeth acceded to the Treaty of Versailles, and a few months later to that of Stockholm, which Sweden, Austria, and France had concluded with the immediate object of resisting the aggressions of the King of Prussia.[2]

III

The part which Russia was to take in the Seven Years' War was thus decided, and Frederic, in spite of his brilliant and complicated diplomacy, was doomed to the active enmity of the Power whose alliance had been his earliest object. But during the years of bloodshed which followed, when the armies of Russia were fighting in many great battles for the cause of Maria Theresa, and when the Court of Elizabeth was controlled by Esterhazy and de l'Hôpital, there was another Court in Russia whose increasing influence kept alive the hopes of the enemies of France and Austria.

The marriage of the Grand Duke Peter with Sophie Frédérique of Anhalt-Zerbst had been celebrated with a splendid ceremonial in 1745; the Princess had received the name of Catherine on her admission into the Greek Church, and the *protégée* of Frederic II. was already making her amazing personality felt amongst her future subjects. From the first she seems to have understood the necessities of her position. While the half-insane boy who was her husband drank and played the buffoon, while he had mocked at

[1] See Mitchell to Holderness, May 27 and 30, June 2, 1756 (*Mitchell Papers*, British Museum Add. MS. 6,804). See also Mitchell to Hanbury Williams, May 30, 1756.

[2] See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 574. The Treaty of Versailles was concluded May 1, 1756; that of Stockholm, March 21, 1757.

the religious ceremonial with which he was baptized into the Greek Church, and had perpetually offended Russian society by refusing to learn Russian, and by his known German proclivities, Catherine had understood how to make herself loved by the people by a scrupulous observance of orthodox rites, and by an extraordinary diligence in mastering the difficulties of the Russian tongue. Hanbury Williams describes the Grand Duke as 'feeble and violent,' but as having in the early years of his marriage a great confidence in the Grand Duchess, of whom he used to say that though 'he did not himself understand things, yet his wife understood everything.' Bestucheff, who had opposed the marriage, was not long in seeing how much might be gained by conciliating a future Empress of so much character and resolution. It was manifestly his interest to be on good terms with the 'young Court,' for with Elizabeth his influence was daily on the decline; but he soon saw that little was to be hoped from the Grand Duke, and it is certain that he intrigued to have Catherine recognised upon equal terms with her husband in the succession to the throne. Elizabeth's indolence and inattention to business made it possible to hope that her signature to such an arrangement might be obtained without her knowledge. The plot failed, but the project was not forgotten, and meanwhile Catherine was a strong advocate of the foreign policy which Bestucheff originated. She supported warmly the English alliance, and was on the most friendly terms with the English ambassador, to whom a chance of travel had given the means of effectually influencing her.

Sir Charles Williams had brought with him from Warsaw, where he had been for many years the English Resident, a young Polish nobleman of remarkable personal beauty and of 'almost regal bearing,' Stanislas Poniatowski.[1] Poniatowski had just

[1] See *Le Secret du Roi*, par le Duc de Broglie. Stanislas Auguste Poniatowski, the future and last King of Poland (1764). He was born in 1732, the fourth son of Stanislas Ciolek Poniatowski and of Constance Czartoryska. The anger which he conceived against the King of Poland on the occasion of his recall from

returned from Paris, where he had been the favourite of the *salons*, where he had learnt the art of *savoir vivre*, 'and that triple talent of the French courtier, the art of winning women, of carrying off an affair of honour with *éclat*, and of contracting debts which he could not pay.' There, too, he had learnt to be a judge of the arts and to talk philosophy. To so many charms the grossness and ignorance of the Grand Duke were a sorry contrast. Poniatowski became Catherine's acknowledged lover, and, with Bestucheff and Williams, exercised a great influence over the 'young Court,' which was soon almost in open opposition to the policy of the Government. In 1757 the French ambassador complains that 'M. le Duc est aussi Prussien enraciné que Mme la Duchesse est Anglaise forcenée.' Catherine had warmly upheld the ill-fated treaty with England in 1755:

'C'est avec une véritable satisfaction,' she writes to Williams after its conclusion, 'que je vous félicite sur la conclusion de votre traité, que j'ai toujours vivement souhaité comme utile et nécessaire à ma patrie adoptive, pour laquelle vous savez, monsieur, que je verserai mon sang avec joie. C'est en continuant un jour (ce que pourtant je prie la Providence de reculer longues années) l'effet de ce traité de la manière la plus efficace que je compte en temps et lieu prouver à sa Majesté Britannique mon attachement pour les intérêts mutuels des deux couronnes et la reconnaissance que je dois aux témoignages d'amitié réitérés qu'elle a bien voulu me donner.' [1]

Later, when Hanbury Williams was leaving St. Petersburg after the unfortunate fiasco which brought his embassy to an end in 1757, she writes once more that she shall do all in her power to bring back Russia to what she considers her true interests; that is to say, to a close union with England.[2]

Russia brought him into direct antagonism with the Government of the House of Saxony on his return to Poland. He became the chief of the party which opposed the succession of another member of that House in Poland, and in 1763 himself became the candidate for the throne, supported by Russian arms.

[1] *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

[2] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 63.

The English Government had not failed to keep this friendly disposition alive in the heart of the future Empress. In July 1756 we find Catherine, through the medium of Hanbury Williams, expressing a wish to borrow a sum of money 'to be used in favour of England.' She sees the danger, she tells the English ambassador, of French intrigues such as that by which La Chétardie had once contrived a revolution, and she would do all that she could to animate the Grand Duke to do his utmost in resisting the readmission of a French representative at St. Petersburg; but she could do a great deal more if she had money, for in Russia nothing was to be done without it. There was but one answer to such an appeal. In August not only was 10,000*l.* sent to the Grand Duchess, but a pension was again bestowed upon Bestucheff, whose interest in England it was necessary to stimulate.[1]

The King of Prussia, too, made his approaches to the 'young Court,' and mainly through the medium of Hanbury Williams. The Grand Duke had been an easy convert, for such noble aspirations and ambitions as could struggle to life in a half-barbaric nature, amidst the debasing influences which surrounded him, had made Peter the almost idolatrous admirer of the great soldier, and Frederic had known how to follow up his advantage. It was the Grand Duke's ambition to recover his lost patrimony of Schleswig, as soon as he was safely in possession of his throne. Frederic therefore sent a message to him, through Williams, that he would not interfere with Schleswig if Peter, upon his accession, would make peace with him.[2] Such a promise was enough to bind Peter to his interests, and he had voted in favour of the retention of the

[1] Holderness and Williams' Correspondence, 1755–1756, *Hist. MS. Third Report* (Lansdowne MSS.). Two receipts in Catherine's handwriting, addressed to the English agent, are still in existence, of July 21 and November 11, 1756.

[2] Frederic to Mitchell, December 25, 1756.

English treaty, and had lived ever since on terms of friendship with the English ambassador.[1] Between himself and Keith,[2] who succeeded Williams, there had been a special bond of union, for Keith, too, had a strong personal admiration for Frederic, and from the first, in obedience to orders from home, had acted practically as his acknowledged representative at the Russian Court, taking his orders and regularly communicating with him through the medium of Sir Andrew Mitchell, the British representative at Berlin.[3]

It was clear, therefore, that the Anglo-Prussian party was to be feared, and that it was the interest of the French and Austrian faction at St. Petersburg to disunite, and, if possible, to destroy them.[4] M. de l'Hôpital, who had been in residence since January 1757, was convinced that Elizabeth was likely to disinherit the Grand Duke, for whom she constantly showed something like contempt, and there were not wanting those who believed that Ivan and the House of Brunswick would be restored to the

[1] See for this his friendly letter of farewell to Williams, which, with Catherine's, were communicated to Frederic when Williams left Russia. Eichel to Frederic, February 13, 1758, *Corresp. Polit. Friedrich's des Zweiten.*

[2] Sir Robert Keith, ninth in descent from William, second Earl Marshal, had been Minister at Vienna since 1748, having been recalled when the coalition between France and Austria was announced in 1757, which resulted in war between Austria and England. In 1758 he went to St. Petersburg, where he remained until Lord Buckinghamshire's arrival in September 1762. On his return home he was handsomely pensioned, and lived some years in Edinburgh in the enjoyment of the society of many distinguished men, among whom were the historians Hume and Robertson. He died in 1774. His son was Sir Robert Murray Keith, also an ambassador to Vienna, and a distinguished diplomatist. See *Memoirs of Sir Robert Murray Keith*, by Mrs. Gillespie Smith. See also *Keith Papers* in the British Museum.

[3] Holderness to Keith, February 25, and Keith to Mitchell, September 19, 1758; Add. MS. 6,825, British Museum.

[4] One of the suggestions M. de l'Hôpital was instructed to make to the 'young Court' was that the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg, which reigned in England, must necessarily have an interest in advocating the rule of Ivan of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in Russia, as they were branches of the same House. See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 57.

throne of Russia.[1] He was therefore at no pains to conciliate the 'young Court,' and he soon hopelessly lost favour with Catherine by an attempt to get rid of Poniatowski, the most influential member of the clique which surrounded the Grand Duchess, and which de l'Hôpital described as consisting of 'a rogue, a madman, and a fool.'[2] The 'fool,' however, was not easily dislodged. Poniatowski, who had been first attached to the English Embassy in the character of friend and secretary to Williams, had obtained in 1757 from the King of Poland[3] the post of Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. Petersburg. He was now recalled by that monarch at the pressing instance of the King of France.[4] Catherine was bitterly indignant with the French ambassador, and did not scruple to agitate for a reversal of this sentence. Through Bestucheff's influence she contrived that he should remain, though upon a different footing; and he did not leave St. Petersburg until 1758, when the Grand Duchess's disgrace brought about the exile of all her friends.

This was not the only cause of resentment which Catherine owed to French intrigue. It was the French faction which in the same year contrived the fall of Bestucheff, and his ruin had almost involved her own. The French Government had known that to Bestucheff they owed the Anglo-Russian alliances of 1742 and 1755, as well as the humiliation of their ambassador, La Chétardie. They were convinced that he was irrecoverably corrupted by English gold,[5] that he was the head and front of the opposition which the 'young Court' offered to the influence of France, and that so long as he remained in office Russia was not to be depended upon as an ally. Accordingly it was Bestucheff who was the real

[1] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 70 and 152.

[2] Bestucheff, Hanbury Williams, and Poniatowski (*ibid.* ii. 111).

[3] Augustus III., Elector of Saxony and King of Poland.

[4] October 30, 1757. See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 73. See also *La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, p. 173.

[5] See instructions to Douglas: *Recueil des Instructions, etc.: Russie*, ii. 25.

object of their attack upon Poniatowski; and Esterhazy, the Austrian ambassador, had also done his utmost to persuade Elizabeth to force him to retire. In the winter of 1757 an event occurred which gave both parties the opportunity they desired to effect his disgrace. General Appraxin, who commanded the Russian army against Frederic of Prussia, had, after the decisive victory of Gross Jaegersdorf, withdrawn his troops into quarters in Poland, instead of advancing into Prussia, whom he was suspected of secretly favouring. A clamour was immediately raised by the Austrian and French ambassadors, and Appraxin was deprived of his command. Bestucheff professed the utmost indignation at his conduct; nevertheless Appraxin's papers, when he was brought to trial, were said to incriminate Bestucheff, who had now completely lost favour with Elizabeth. His complicity with Appraxin could not be proved, for he had time to burn his papers before his arrest, but his connection with the plot to bring Catherine to the throne, either with or even to the exclusion of her husband, was more than suspected;[1] it was certain that in 1756 he had received a sum of money from the King of Prussia, and Catherine herself had at least been approached by Frederic with the view of making her the medium of a bribe to Appraxin.[2] Her utmost skill and courage did not save her from suffering a humiliating disgrace, which was the more serious that she was at the same time denounced by her husband, who had been alienated from her as much by his own licence of conduct as by hers, and by the intrigues of the French party, who aimed at separating the Grand Duke from a wife whose influence was so powerfully in favour of the enemies of France.

The Duc de Choiseul,[3] however, now that Elizabeth's health was

[1] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 61 *et seq.* *La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, pp. 159–175. Keith to Holderness, March 14, 1758; Add. MS. 6,825, British Museum. See also Flassan, *Histoire de la Dip. Fr.* vol. vi. Cf. also Woronzow's *Memoirs*.

[2] Mitchell to Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams, January 8, 1757.

[3] First Minister of France from 1758 to 1770. He was known first as the Comte de Stainville, then as the Duc de Choiseul-Stainville, and must be

visibly failing, was beginning to see the necessity of gaining the Grand Duchess, and could conceive of no better plan than to supersede Poniatowski with another lover. In April 1760 M. de Breteuil was sent to St. Petersburg to supplement the efforts of the Marquis de l'Hôpital, and eventually to succeed him. The new ambassador was twenty-seven years of age, a young and handsome colonel of Dragoons;[1] and he received from the Duc de Choiseul unequivocal hints as to what his mission was to be. La Baronne de Breteuil was to be left at home; but she was probably a wise woman, as well as a young and beautiful one, and she joined her husband in the second year of his embassy. Be that as it may, the Duke's plan of influencing the future Empress by the charms of the young ambassador had no success; and Breteuil, who had received instructions at all costs to conciliate the 'young Court,' used his influence to bring back the Grand Duchess's lover. This, however, was strenuously opposed by the Czarina; and the French Court, though willing to oblige Catherine, found it more politic for the moment to yield to Elizabeth. Poniatowski was not to return.[2] But Catherine knew how to console herself, and eventually to make her peace with the Czarina by a masterly submission, which completely disarmed Elizabeth,[3] and successfully outwitted the clumsy designs of the Grand Duke to get rid of so inconvenient a wife.

Meanwhile Bestucheff, whose trial had lasted almost a year, was finally exiled in 1759. His fall was the triumph of the French party. Yet his policy towards France at least was amply justified by events. France was in truth but a half-hearted ally to Russia. She had indeed put forth all her arts to obtain the accession of that Power to the Treaty of Versailles; but her main object

distinguished from his cousin, the Duc de Choiseul Praslin, who became Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1761.

[1] Louis Auguste le Tonnelier, Baron de Breteuil, born 1733. He had already begun his diplomatic career at Cologne in 1758 (*Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 102, 118).

[2] He returned thirty-five years later, a dethroned king.

[3] In April 1759.

had been Austria, and the friendship of Russia had only been valued in proportion to the danger which would have resulted from her enmity.[1] Both Austria and France were jealously watchful of Russia's aggrandisement, and were equally determined that she should not acquire a footing in the Empire by retaining the province of Prussia,[2] which Elizabeth had specially coveted as her share of the spoils of war. It is clear from the whole correspondence of the French ambassador at St. Petersburg at this time that the old jealousy of Russia was still strong in French counsels, and that all through the war, though the French Government were sometimes in fear lest Russia should withdraw her forces when they were most needed, they were much more inclined to be jealous lest she should be too successful.

√ Meanwhile France was beginning to weary of the war, in which she had suffered so severely, and M. de Choiseul was disposed in 1760 to consider that Russia might be persuaded to act as mediatrice between Austria and Prussia, so as to bring about a peace between those two Powers, at the same time that negotiations were beginning between France and England with the same object.[3] This was the secret of his new policy of conciliation towards the 'young Court' in the last years of Elizabeth, and of the mission of M. de Breteuil, who was designed to counteract the effects of M. de l'Hôpital's neglect, and of the Grand Duchess's displeasure in the matter of Poniatowski.

M. de Breteuil had from the first a task of intricate difficulty, for he was the representative not only of the avowed policy of his Government, but also of the secret correspondence which Louis XV.

[1] See Le Marquis de l'Hôpital au Duc de Choiseul, May 20, 1759 (*Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 91).

[2] 'The demand for Prussia is in pursuance of the plan of Peter the Great, who always desired to make his empire conterminous with Germany. Prussia, possessed by Russia, would be too troublesome to Poland, who had already too much frontier in common with that empire.' See 'Instructions to the Baron de Breteuil,' April 1, 1760. See also *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 68.

[3] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 97.

had, unknown to his Ministers, carried on for many years with the Czarina Elizabeth. This extraordinary system of secret diplomacy,[1] which the King of France carried on with more than one of the Courts of Europe, was more generally entrusted to a special agent, who occupied to all appearance a subordinate position to that of the accredited ambassador, but was nevertheless constantly able to counteract his negotiations in the interests of the King's private designs. The chief object of those designs was the preservation of Poland, in which Louis was, both from personal and political reasons, deeply interested, and in whose behalf he had long been suspiciously watchful of the Russian Government, and directly at variance with his own Ministry. On this point, as well as on many others, M. de Breteuil's official instructions were opposed to those which he received in secret from the King; and it was practically impossible to reconcile them. His relations with the Grand Duchess, whom it was his special mission to gain, were made particularly difficult, for he was to hint to Catherine that the King would not be unwilling in the future to use his influence with the King of Poland to procure the return of Poniatowsky to Russia, while the secret instructions enjoined upon him at all costs to hinder the return of an envoy whose influence was exercised in favour of the Russian as opposed to the French interests in Poland.

The open and acknowledged policy of the French Government was, besides, entirely inconsistent in itself. France was desirous of Russian mediation in the negotiations for peace, was jealous of the influence of England and of the advantages which she enjoyed in her Russian commerce, and yet was unwilling to purchase Elizabeth's friendship by yielding to her in the matter of Prussia. On the one hand, she was anxious for the alliance of Russia, now

[1] The existence of this secret diplomacy was suspected in the lifetime of Louis XV., and has since been proved. The first publication of a portion of it took place in 1866, when M. Boutaric edited two volumes of *Correspondance sécrète inédite de Louis XV. avec le Comte de Broglie.* It had its origin in 1745, and five years later had many ramifications and a great influence. See *Le Secret du Roi*, par le Duc de Broglie. See also *Recueil des Instructions : Russie*, ii. 3.

that Sweden was too feeble to be of any use as an ally, for if Russia and France were once united there could be no danger of the desertion of Austria, to whom the alliance of Russia was a necessity.

On the other hand, the traditional policy which France had pursued in relation to Sweden, Turkey, and Poland was still a perpetual barrier to her friendship with Russia, and served to keep alive the sources of jealousy between them. Though these Powers had ceased to be powerful, and now needed rather than gave support, they were still of importance to France, for their existence was a necessity to her system of European balance, by which at all costs the greater Powers of the North must not be allowed to preponderate.[1]

It remained, therefore, the main object of French diplomacy in Northern Europe to keep Russia inactive and removed as far as possible from European affairs,[2] and their real dread of the Power with whom they had allied themselves is plainly enough revealed in the instructions which M. de Breteuil received on the occasion of his mission in the last years of the Czarina Elizabeth,[3] where Russia is thus described:

'Un pays aussi étendu que les états réunis des plus grands princes de l'Europe, et qui, n'ayant besoin que d'un petit nombre d'hommes pour sa sûreté particulière, peut avoir en dehors de ses frontières des armées formidables, un pays dont le commerce s'étend jusqu'à Chine et qui est à portée de s'enrichir en se procurant de l'Asie facilement et en peu de temps les denrées que les autres nations ne peuvent en tirer que par de longues et dangereuses navigations . . doit avec raison paraître redoutable à ses voisins actuels. On peut assurer sans exagération que la puissance des Russes est augmentée de moitié depuis la mort de Pierre I, et l'on peut juger par le rôle qu'elle joue aujourd'hui de celui qu'elle jouera sur la scène du monde si de nouvelles acquisitions la portaient à un plus haut état de grandeur

[1] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, i. v. xi. xlvii.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 213.

[3] 'Instructions au Baron de Breteuil,' August 1, 1760. See Flassan, *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française*, vi. 193 *et seq.*

et de pouvoir. Les Cours éclairées ont senti lorsque les armées moscovites passèrent pour la première fois en Allemagne combien il était dangereux de les y avoir introduites, et comme il était intéressant pour tous les souverains de veiller avec attention sur les vues et sur les démarches d'une nation dont la puissance commençait déjà à devenir redoutable. . . . La hauteur avec laquelle la Russie a exigé le titre impérial des souverains qui n'avaient pas encore eu la complaisance de le lui accorder; le peu de fidélité qu'elle a fait paraître dans l'exécution de son dernier traité avec les Turcs, qui se plaignent de ce qu'elle a établi un fort et une colonie sur un terrain qui leur appartient . . . l'autorité qu'elle a prétendu exercer sur le gouvernement intérieur de la Suède, la façon dont elle se conduit avec les Polonais depuis trois ans; les vues qu'elle a déjà annoncées par rapport à une fixation de limites entre l'empire russe at la Pologne; enfin le système et la conduite de la Russie, la forme de son administration et son état militaire doivent faire craindre l'agrandissement de cette puissance à tous les princes qui ont à cœur la sûreté et le repos publics.'

Such was the real attitude of France towards Russia, when on January 5, 1762, the Czarina Elizabeth died and Peter III. was immediately proclaimed.

Peter's opposition to the French alliance and his hatred for all things French had long been an open secret. So, too, had been his friendship for the King of Prussia. A week after his accession he declared his intention of making peace with Frederic, and soon it was known that the troops which had been opposing him were to remain in his service, and even the conquests which had been won by Russian arms were to be restored to Prussia. In May 1762 a treaty of peace was formally concluded between them, and in June a close alliance was formed, the conditions of which were not immediately made known.

It soon appeared, however, that the objects nearest to the hearts of both monarchs had been mutually guaranteed: that Frederic had undertaken to enforce the surrender of Schleswig, if Denmark should prove obstinate in negotiation, and, on the other hand, that he himself should be assured in the peaceful possession of

Silesia and Glatz by the help of Russian forces. A significant article of the treaty stipulated that no change would be permitted in the Constitution of Poland,[1] and that the Duchy of Courland should be bestowed on a member of the House of Holstein.

Thus Prussia, at the close of the Seven Years' War, owed her salvation to the armies of the Czar, and it remained only to be seen whether England, who had forfeited her treaty with Russia by her alliance with Frederic in 1756, was to be associated with him in this new reconciliation.

IV

The accession of George III. did not affect the policy of the English Government towards Russia. Among the nations of the North she was still pre-eminently the Power whose interests were opposed to those of France, and whose friendship, therefore, England might hope to gain. With Sweden all formal diplomatic relations had been broken off since 1747, when France had concluded with that Power a fresh treaty of subsidy, which was renewed from time to time during the Seven Years' War. She was still, therefore, dependent upon French gold, and in 1757 had acceded to the alliance between France and Austria.[2] It remained, therefore, during the greater part of the eighteenth century, an object of importance to England to secure the friendship and

[1] This had been a part of Frederic's policy from the first days of his reign. By a secret article in the first treaty which he had concluded with Russia in 1740 it was also agreed that Poland should not be permitted to make her sovereignty hereditary. This was aimed against the permanence of the House of Saxony in Poland. It is clear that the elective system tended to perpetuate the anarchy of Poland. See for this treaty, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Zweiten*, vol. i. July 31, 1740.

[2] See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 574. See for English grievances against Sweden in 1747, R.O. *Sweden*, vol. 120, the despatches of Guy Dickens, December 30, 1746 *et seq.* Sweden had long remained Jacobite in her sympathies, and had undertaken to furnish 200 Swedish gentlemen and twice as many soldiers to the invasion of Scotland in 1745.

alliance of Russia. She needed it, that her Baltic trade might be safe, that Hanover might be safe, and that thus her fleets might be free for the struggle with France. It was Lord Chatham's object, during his short administration in 1766 and 1767, to counteract the influence of the Family Compact by a union with Russia and Prussia. In 1783 Fox, whilst discussing with Harris with whom it were best to unite among the Northern Powers, 'whose alliance,' he writes,[1] 'has been and ever will be the system of every enlightened Englishman,' includes Russia as a necessary member of every possible combination. He argued that she was England's 'natural ally,' and the most effectual counterpoise to the power of France; while Burke maintained that her extension to the South was a safeguard and not a danger to the European balance. The nation also at the first hint of a war with Russia was in terror for a trade which was so considerable on both sides as to make a possible breach between them appear in the light of a national disaster.[2]

It was not, then, English statesmen who were responsible for a state of things such as Harris describes from St. Petersburg, where he was ambassador from 1778 to 1783.

'At home,' he writes, towards the conclusion of his mission, 'our rulers ever looked to this great lady for relief. In better times and when she wanted us, she had promised it us, and a reliance on that promise, joined to the intimate union both of the commercial and political interests of the two Empires, made them sanguine in their hopes. Experience, however, soon taught them on how sandy a foundation those hopes were grounded. Our requisitions for succour were at first avoided, then declined, and at last rejected without ceremony. Our proposals for an alliance for purchasing those succours by adequate compensations shared universally the same fate, and we uniformly have met with reserve, coolness, and

[1] Fox to Harris, April 11, May 16 and July 27, 1783, *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. ii.

[2] See for this the action of Parliament and of the nation on the occasion of Pitt's preparations for war with Russia in 1791. See Lecky, v. 286–293.

even something worse, where we expected, and with so much reason, acts of friendship and support.'[1]

Catherine was, indeed, to prove liberal in her professions of friendship. As Grand Duchess she had been ready to promise everything to Hanbury Williams. As Empress she showered favours upon the Earl of Buckinghamshire. Yet it was she who held aloof from an alliance which she had once been so eager to promote, and which she long continued to protest was the dearest wish of her heart. Whilst thus protesting, she put herself at the head of the Armed Neutrality, which combined nearly all the Northern Powers in diplomatic hostility to the maritime power of Great Britain; and when the English Government, seriously depressed by their ill-success in the American War and sorely in need of an ally, endeavoured to purchase the assistance and mediation of Russia by the offer of the island of Minorca,[2] Catherine refused even that bait, tempting as it was, lest she should be drawn into the English quarrel.

In 1783 she imposed crushing duties upon most articles of British produce, and in the same year passed a Navigation Law which cut off a profitable carrying trade between Russia and Southern Europe, which had hitherto been enjoyed by British vessels.[3]

In effect, her 'Northern System' did not include England, though Panin, her Grand Chancellor, who avowed himself to Lord Buckinghamshire as the author of it, in describing his scheme for the Northern League which was to counteract the influence of the Family Compact, mentioned England, as well as Prussia and Holland, as members with Russia in the projected alliance.

No alliance, however, was concluded. A Treaty of Commerce, negotiated in vain by Lord Buckinghamshire, was carried by his

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, ii. 2. October 25, 1782.

[2] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, i. 438, July 25, 1781.

[3] See Lecky, v. 215.

successor; but it was not till 1793, when the fear of Republican and Revolutionary France called upon them to support the common interests of European monarchies, that England and Russia were once more united by a treaty of alliance.

It is because the correspondence of the Earl of Buckinghamshire throws light upon these diplomatic inconsistencies that his mission, in itself uneventful, becomes of some importance. Their true history is to be read in the bundle of papers with which the ambassador went armed to St. Petersburg in the summer of 1762, in the midst of the negotiations which were to put an end to the war between England and France as a preliminary to the peace of Europe. The negotiations in which he was himself to be employed were connected with the beginnings of events which were soon to electrify Europe. His immediate mission was to renew the lapsed alliance with Russia, and to counteract as far as possible the enmity of Frederic the Great, who, at the close of the Seven Years' War, was once more become bitterly hostile to England.

In January 1762 Lord Bute had made certain approaches to the Court of Vienna through Sir Joseph Yorke, the British Minister at The Hague, who was directed to sound the Empress Queen as to her inclination for peace, and as to whether 'she was not inclined to fear the enormous and dangerous power of France.'

To this no reply was vouchsafed till the following March, when it was coldly intimated to the English Government that 'the Court of Vienna did not understand England's confidential appeal.'[1]

Proposals were then made to secure the intervention of the Czar, and Bute pointed out to the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, on the news of Peter's peace with Frederic, 'that the King chiefly rejoiced at the news in the hope that his Prussian Majesty will be earnestly *exhorted* by the Czar rather to put an end

[1] Bute to Sir Joseph Yorke, January 12, 1762, British Museum Add. MSS. vol. 6,820. See also Bute to Mitchell, March 26, 1762, Adolphus's *History*, vol. i. App. pp. 579–589.

to the war by reasonable and proper terms than encouraged by him to persist in it.'[1] Meanwhile Frederic himself had turned a deaf ear to every suggestion of peace, and at last the English subsidy to Prussia, which it was promised should be continued if he would have given any engagement on that point,[2] was withdrawn in April 1762.

These early negotiations were carried on by Bute without the full knowledge of his colleagues, and the Duke of Newcastle, who had constantly supported the subsidy, was, on the news of its withdrawal, forced to resign.

When, therefore, the peace between England and France was concluded on November 3, 1762, upon Bute more especially fell all the odium that attached to it. He was a hated Scotchman, a minion of the Court, a too highly favoured friend of the unpopular Princess of Wales; his pride alienated those who might have supported his measures; and the weakness with which he quailed before the storm he had raised made him one of the best hated men of his generation. No scurrility of abuse was spared him in his own day, and Carlyle has accepted[3] without any attempt at a defence, without even a reference to his own denial of them, the monstrous charges of treachery which Frederic the Great brought against him in connection with the peace.

Frederic accused the English Government, in the person of Lord Bute, *of having concluded a separate peace with France without due regard to the interests of Prussia; of having secretly approached the Court of Vienna with an offer to guarantee Silesia to Austria if she would retire from the struggle, and of having attempted to deter the Emperor Peter III. from his treaty of peace and alliance with Frederic, on the ground that the alliance of Russia would make him too extravagant in his demands at the conclusion of the war.*

[1] Bute to Keith, February 23, 1762, R.O. *Précis Russia*, 1761–1762.

[2] Bute to Kniphausen, February 26, 1762. George III. to Frederic II., March 30, 1762 (British Museum Add. MS. vol. 6,809).

[3] Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, vi. 298.

These charges were in the most solemn and circumstantial manner denied by Lord Bute in a well-known letter[1] to Sir Andrew Mitchell, the British ambassador at Berlin; yet Frederic did not scruple to found upon the supposition of their truth a policy most hostile to England at a critical period of her history, and to repeat his accusations with every term of contempt and obloquy in his Memoirs.[2]

Posterity has been content to bear these accusations with indifference, and no one has found it worth his while to whitewash Lord Bute or to cast a stone at the great Frederic on his behalf. It has been left to a German writer[3] to point out how inconsistent are the charges of Frederic with the character of Bute, as given by some of the best of his contemporaries, and that, in spite of all the mud thrown by men who despised him as a Scot and a Court favourite—crimes which Englishmen then could not easily forgive—no charge has really been proved against his personal honour. It was Fox who said that 'Bute had never broken his word' to him; Warburton, 'that he was indeed a remarkable man to be First Minister, since he was a Scot, the King's favourite, and an honest man;' Dr. Johnson who, though severely critical of his administration, calls him 'a very honourable man—a man who meant well'; while Lady Hervey's testimony is the more valuable, that it is the general opinion which she retails, as she did not herself personally know him. 'I know so much of him,' she writes, 'that he was always a good husband, an excellent father, a man of sincerity and good feeling, more than is usual among men. People say he is proud. I do not know if this is so. Perhaps he is. But it is the same pride of which Mr. Pitt is accused, which keeps him always from narrow, false, and slippery ways.'[4]

[1] Bute to Sir A. Mitchell, May 26, 1762, Bisset's *Memoirs of Sir A. Mitchell.*

[2] *Mémoires de Frédéric II.* vol. ii. 226.

[3] See *William Pitt (Chatham) und Graf Bute*, von Albert von Ruville, 1895. Berlin.

[4] *Letters of Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey*, p. 275.

This is the statesman who has been made the scapegoat for the hostility conceived by Frederic against England at the close of the Seven Years' War, and whom Frederic, as well as his Scotch biographer, have pilloried for all time as a traitor to every principle of political honour.

It is certain that Frederic's hostility, unjustifiable as it may be proved to be, had a real influence upon our relations with the nations of the Continent at a time when we were sorely in need of help, and that, in particular, it rendered null and void for many years the negotiations for an alliance with Russia, which English statesmen considered the more necessary that the defection of Frederic had left England without any important ally in her struggle with France in the eastern and western colonies. Harris is perpetually reporting obstructions from Prussian intrigues and malignant rumours from Potsdam.

'In every negotiation I undertook,' he writes, in reviewing the history of his mission,[1] 'I found the baneful effects of the Prussian alliance with France. It was the King of Prussia who induced the Empress to negative every proposal we made of alliance during the year 1778; it was he alone who prevented her sending us a fleet in August 1779; and though afterwards his influence began to decline, yet he still preserved a sufficient degree of weight to injure us most essentially; and it was he who taught the Empress to believe that we were haughty, cold, and supercilious, that we treated her with less attention than the Bourbons, that we oppressed her trade, and were a selfish, tyrannical nation.'

The first effects of this enmity were felt by the English ambassador at St. Petersburg in March 1762, when Keith reports to Bute[2] 'that Peter III., from something contained in a despatch from Prince Galitzin, at London, of February 6, had conceived

[1] Harris to Grantham, January 29, 1783, *Malmesbury Correspondence* vol. ii.

[2] Keith to Bute, March 19, 1762, R.O. *Précis Russia*, 1761–1763.

that our Court had thoughts of making up matters with that of Vienna, and is greatly out of humour about it.'

In spite of Keith's assurances of the fidelity of the English Court, Peter showed such persistent resentment that Keith felt it necessary to warn Bute that the Emperor had such a passion for Frederic that nothing would make him fly off so certainly as any indifference to his interests. But from that time Peter ceased to treat Keith with any confidence, and the treaty of peace which he concluded with Frederic on May 5, as well as the alliance of June 1762, were ratified by him without any communication of their contents to the ambassador who had hitherto been the chief means of communication between the two monarchs.[1]

Yet so early as March in the same year the English ambassador at Berlin[2] had received instructions to give an emphatic denial to the King of Prussia '*that any proposal had ever been made to the Court of Vienna of cessions of Prussian territory*,' and the offending despatch to Sir Joseph Yorke, through whom the negotiations had been carried on, was actually shown him.[3] Mitchell's declaration, which should have been decisive, was not believed by Frederic, who repeated the accusation, though in a modified form, in a memorial which was shortly afterwards sent to the English Government.[4]

Bute's own declaration that the charge was a groundless and shameful falsehood[5] is confirmed by the text of his despatch, as well as by Grenville's testimony to Lord Buckinghamshire when the

[1] Keith to Bute, June 18 and 22, 1762, R.O. *Précis Russia*, 1761–63. See, too, Grenville to Keith, July 23, 1762, *id.*

[2] Andrew Mitchell, 1708–1771. He was appointed British Envoy to Frederic of Prussia in 1756.

[3] The King feared that the misrepresentations of the Prussian Ministers might inflame Frederic's suspicions if only an abstract were shown him. Bute to Mitchell, March 30, 1762. Adolphus's *History*, vol. i. App. For this despatch of January 12, 1762, see Appendix, Note B.

[4] *Buckinghamshire Papers*, Memorial A.

[5] Bute to Mitchell, May 26, 1762. See Bisset's *Memoirs of Sir A. Mitchell.*

matter was later made an article in the formidable indictment of the whole policy of the English Government towards Frederic.

'Towards the close of the war,' writes Grenville, 'in order to try to draw the Empress Queen from her intimate connection with France, an inquiry was obliquely made how far she might be disposed to accept of an indemnification *in Italy and the Low Countries*. This his Prussian Majesty thought proper to resent, though it would be difficult for him to prove how far that resentment was founded.'[1]

This seems conclusive, and in the face of such testimony it is not easy to see how the charge on this head can any longer be accepted. But there is yet the second accusation against Lord Bute, which had a more immediate influence upon our relations with Russia.

Frederic told Mitchell[2] that it had been reported that

'Lord Bute had told Prince Galitzin, Mr. Wroughton was sent to Russia with instructions for him and Mr. Keith to cultivate and extend the friendship between the two Courts; . . . that one of his instructions was to persuade the Emperor to concur in making a general peace; and for that end it was hoped that the Czar would not withdraw his troops from the Prussian territory, as Lord Bute could not persuade himself that the Emperor would prefer the alliance with the King of Prussia to the national alliance with the House of Austria; that, by not withdrawing the troops, the King of Prussia would be under the necessity of making considerable cessions to the House of Austria; that it was not the intention of England to make eternal war to please the King of Prussia; that England wanted first to save him, but wished that Prince could be brought to make considerable cessions. . . .'

These statements had been transmitted by Prince Galitzin[3] to

[1] *Buckinghamshire Papers*, British Museum Add. MS. 22,858.

[2] Mitchell to Bute, May 3, 1762, Bisset's *Memoirs of Sir A. Mitchell.*

[3] Alexandre, Prince Galitzin. He was Russian ambassador to London in the last years of George II., and received fresh credentials to George III. In February 1762 he was recalled and was appointed Vice-Chancellor at St. Petersburg.

his own Government, and thence in some form to the King of Prussia. The whole was said to have passed in conversation between Prince Galitzin, then Russian ambassador in London, and Lord Bute; and the truth or falsehood of the report rested upon the word of Galitzin as opposed to that of Lord Bute, for there seems to have been no other person present at the interview.

Once more Lord Bute solemnly and emphatically asserted that his words had been grossly misrepresented,[1] and on this point once more we shall find corroborative testimony in the 'Buckinghamshire Papers.'

The Earl of Buckinghamshire received his instructions as Keith's successor at St. Petersburg in August 1762, precisely at the moment when the preliminaries of peace were in negotiation, and when Frederic's jealousy and suspicion were at their height. A few days before, the King had formally declined to hold any communication with the Prussian Ministers in London 'until they should cease to interfere in the internal affairs of the kingdom.'[2] From a letter, of which George Grenville had somehow obtained possession, it appeared that the King of Prussia had definitely instructed his ambassadors, MM. Kniphausen and Michell, to foment as far as possible the sedition and discontent which were ready to burst forth against the Ministry of Bute,[3] and this has been corroborated with overwhelming force by Frederic's more recently published correspondence.

By these tortuous methods Frederic hoped to get rid of the Ministry before the Duke of Bedford, who was to negotiate the preliminaries, should have actually concluded the peace.[4]

But the strained relations between the English and Prussian Courts only increased the desire of George III. for peace and

[1] Bute to Mitchell, May 26, 1762.

[2] Grenville, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, i. 467.

[3] See also Frederic to Kniphausen and Michell, July 12 and 24, 1762, Oct. 8, 1762, &c., *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Zweiten*, vol. xxii.

[4] See Frederic to Kniphausen and Michell, October 8, 1762, *ibid.* p. 258.

for more trustworthy Continental connections. The Earl of Buckinghamshire's appointment was a part of the policy which the Government was pursuing to that end. In the first instance, that ambassador was to have been accredited to Peter III.;[1] but on July 9 that unfortunate Emperor was deposed after a reign of only six months, and his wife proclaimed in his stead; and it was with Catherine II., afterwards to be called 'the Great,' that he was instructed to conclude as soon as possible a treaty of alliance and mutual defence, and to obtain her co-operation in the conclusion of the peace. With this object he was to represent the conduct of the Government towards Frederic in a fair light, and to clear it from the charges which Frederic had taken care should be perfectly well known to the Russian Government.

Lord Buckinghamshire had some personal qualifications for such a mission, for his prepossessions were by no means in favour of Frederic, and he had long been a personal friend and adherent of George Grenville,[2] of whose policy and character he constantly speaks in his correspondence with warm admiration. The manner also in which his predecessor was superseded goes far to show that the Ministry had felt it necessary to send an envoy to St. Petersburg whose personal predilections were not so exclusively Prussian.

It had been through Keith that Frederic had made his first approaches to Peter III. before his accession,[3] and by the same

[1] George Grenville to Keith, of July 14, mentions Lord Buckinghamshire's appointment, and it will be remembered that communication between St. Petersburg and London took at least a month.

[2] Much of Lord Buckinghamshire's youth had been passed under the guardianship of his aunt, the celebrated Lady Suffolk, at Marble Hill. Lady Suffolk had lived on terms of close intimacy with all the Grenvilles, and Lord and Lady Bute had also been of that society which charmed and attracted men of such different calibre as Horace Walpole and George Grenville. See *Lady Suffolk's Letters*.

[3] Frederic to Keith through Mitchell, January 21, 1762, British Museum Add. MS. 6,844.

medium the first negotiations of a peace between the two monarchs had been carried on.[1] Keith was also in the habit of reporting to Sir Andrew Mitchell whatever he could learn of the movements of the Russian troops,[2] and the directions sent him by Frederic as to the conduct of Prussian affairs at St. Petersburg are sometimes scarcely less definite and direct than the instructions of his own Government.[3] The fact of his having been high in favour with the Grand Duke, moreover, had lost him the favour of the Grand Duchess, and matters had not been improved by his quarrel with Wroughton, sometime English consul at St. Petersburg, who by permitting his house to be used as a rendezvous for Catherine and Stanislas Poniatowski,[4] was high in the Grand Duchess's good graces.

Nevertheless, it was not her accession which had decided Bute to recall Keith, for the Earl of Buckinghamshire had been appointed before the news of that event had reached London.

Keith had himself requested to be recalled so early as March 19, 1762, because Wroughton, with whom he was already on bad terms, had been appointed to act in conjunction with him. Wroughton had been chosen with the idea of giving pleasure to the Empress Catherine; but on Keith representing that Catherine's credit with the Emperor was extremely low, and Peter having, moreover, refused to receive Wroughton,[5] the appointment was cancelled, and Keith then expressed himself as content to stay. Bute therefore, on April 9, proposed that the Emperor should retain him as Ambassador Extraordinary, and the offer was

[1] Frederic II. to George III., March 12, 1762. See Adolphus's *History of England*, vol. i. App.

[2] Keith to Mitchell, April 10, 1759, British Museum Add. MS. 6,825.

[3] Mitchell's despatch to Keith, January 21, 1762. See also Keith to Mitchell, September 19, 1758, July 23, 1761, &c., British Museum Add. MS. 6,825.

[4] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 41 (note 1). See also *La Cour de Russie il y a Cent Ans*, p. 170.

[5] Keith's despatch, February 28, 1762. See also Jenkinson to George Grenville, April 10, 1762, *Grenville Papers*.

accepted by the Grand Chancellor, on behalf of the Emperor, on April 22. These details are of interest in the history of Bute's quarrel with Frederic, for it seems highly improbable that, if Lord Bute had been plotting to undermine Frederic's influence at St. Petersburg, which he is accused of doing in February, he would have let slip the opportunity of superseding so warm a partisan of Frederic, when he had himself requested his recall, and that Keith should have been suffered to remain at St. Petersburg until September.[1]

Meantime Frederic's new accusation against Bute was known at least as early as the middle of May;[2] and it is probable that Keith must then have been looked upon as too enthusiastic a partisan of Frederic to be able to counteract his influence at St. Petersburg,[3] which was not likely to be favourable to English interests. Moreover, Wroughton, who believed that he owed the Czar's refusal to receive him to Keith's influence, was not slow to point out 'that the ambassador's flattery of Peter's extravagant admiration for the King of Prussia was contrary to his British Majesty's pacific views.'[4] However this may have been, Bute's offer that Keith might remain, which had been made before he had become aware of the effect upon the Czar of Frederic's suspicions, was withdrawn on June 29, in spite of the Czar's expressed desire to retain him; and Keith himself became extremely anxious to be recalled as soon as the Revolution broke out which brought Catherine to the throne. 'La grande dame est trop prévenue contre moi pour en revenir,' he writes. 'Je sais cela sans pouvoir en douter. Cependant avec la fierté qui convient à un Ecossais je ne m'estime pas moins pour cela.'[5]

[1] See Lord Buckinghamshire's despatch, September 24, 1762. The date of Keith's return and the reasons for his recall seem to be misapprehended by the author of the article upon him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

[2] Bute to Mitchell, May 26, 1762, British Museum Add. MS. 6,820.

[3] '*Keith seems too ready to support the Prussian system*,' writes Jenkinson to G. Grenville, April 10, 1760, *Grenville Memoirs*, i. 421.

[4] Wroughton's despatch, April 6, 1762, R.O. *Précis Russia*, 1761–1763.

[5] Keith to Mitchell, July 17 and 21, 1762, British Museum Add. MS. 6,825.

His successor was, indeed, more suited to a Court whose perpetual gaiety and dissipation had well-nigh worn out more than one sober and middle-aged ambassador.[1] Lord Buckinghamshire was young and of a strikingly handsome presence, and it is possible that this circumstance—as in the case of M. de Breteuil—was not entirely without influence in procuring his appointment to the Court of Catherine II.[2]

V

A few days before Lord Buckinghamshire left London the Government had received Keith's account of the Revolution by which Catherine, a usurper, and without a single just claim to the throne, had been proclaimed sovereign over the Empire of Peter the Great.

Keith relates,[3] what has now often been told, how Catherine, on the night of July 9, aroused from sleep by Alexis Orlow and warned of the necessity for immediate action if she herself was to escape arrest, had gone without any other attendant to the barracks of the regiments of the Guards, and had by them been recognised and proclaimed.

By nine o'clock in the morning she was in the Kazansky church, hearing the *Te Deum* for her accession sung by triumphant priests, who saw in the downfall of Peter III. the ruin of the enemy of their Church.

Meantime the Emperor, in complete ignorance of what was happening at St. Petersburg, was at Oranienbaum, his summer palace,[4] celebrating with banquets and festivities the peace with

[1] Guy Dickens asked to be recalled in 1755 'because he was too old to go to *every* ball, and here they expect it!'

[2] 'Lord Buckinghamshire may try the remainder of his charms on the heart of an Empress,' writes Horace Walpole, with his accustomed spite (to Sir Horace Mann, July 31, 1762).

[3] Keith to Grenville, July 12, 1762, *Buckinghamshire Papers*. See p. 60, note 2.

[4] About thirty English miles from St. Petersburg.

Prussia, and preparing for his departure for the war against Denmark, which was his most cherished scheme. At the first alarm he endeavoured to take refuge in the fortress of Cronstadt, but the Empress had been beforehand with him, and he was refused admittance.

'It was at this time that Milganow and Wolkow, instead of giving him the only salutary advice, that of retiring to Narva, perplexed and protracted the time by drawing up and correcting proclamations which they proposed sending to Petersburg. If he had gone to Narva, which was in his power for at least twelve hours, he might have remained there in safety till the army in Livonia had marched to his assistance. His Prussian Majesty would have had time to save an ally who was in some sort a martyr to that kind of enthusiasm with which he reverenced and emulated every part of his character. Besides, anybody who knows the fluctuating disposition of the soldiery for the first days after the Revolution will think it more than probable that the greatest part of them would have returned to their duty if their sovereign had been at liberty.'[1]

This, too, was the opinion of Marshal Münnich, who commanded the Emperor's bodyguard of 1,500 Holsteiners. He urged upon Peter to push forward to Revel, whence he might take ship to Pomerania; but Catherine, with 14,000 troops, at whose head she rode, dressed in the ancient uniform of the Preobrasinsky Guard, was marching to attack him in his retreat, and at her approach Peter abdicated, 'like a child,' said Frederic of Prussia, 'who had been sent to bed.'

He was conveyed to Ropsha, 'a place,' wrote Catherine, in her celebrated letter to Poniatowsky, '*très-écarté, mais très-agréable.*' He asked only for his mistress, his dog Mopsa, his negro Narcisse, his violin, and, adds Béranger, the French envoy, 'some romances and a German Bible.' At Ropsha he died, '*d'une colique hémorroidale avec un transport au cerveau. . . .*' Her enemies, as is well known, have not ceased to accuse Catherine of his murder.

[1] *Russian Memoranda, Buckinghamshire Papers.*

'Two or three days after the late Emperor's confinement' (writes Lord Buckinghamshire)[1] 'it was given out at St. Petersburg that he was ill, and a surgeon was directed to attend him; he found that wretched prince in a high fever and convulsed, but so far sensible as to know him. As he thought he discovered some symptoms of poison, he immediately desired some milk might be brought. Alexis Orlow and Teplow, who had the care of him, ordered with great seeming eagerness that some should be sent for immediately, but after having waited a considerable time the surgeon was told that no milk could be found in any of the villages; they then sent him away. The Emperor was probably first poisoned and then strangled, as the appearance of his neck and countenance, when afterwards the body was exposed, seemed to indicate.

'Those who wish to vindicate the Empress allege that her husband suffered his mistress[2] publicly to insult her, and himself avowed an intention to confine her; also that he was determined to declare the Great Duke[3] illegitimate and to set him aside. The two first are incontestable facts; the latter, only a surmise. The friends of the Emperor say in his defence that, though he threatened to confine the Empress, he had too much good-nature and too little resolution ever to carry his menace into execution. Elizabeth Woronzow said to the Emperor, when they were in the galley between Petershoff and Cronstadt: "Fool, if you had followed my advice and confined this bad woman, this mischief could never have happened." No informed person can deny its being evident beyond contradiction that this unfortunate prince was murdered; it is also in general understood by whom. Alexis Orlow commanded the soldiers who guarded him in his confinement, and is supposed, with Teplow and a German officer now upon a commission in Siberia, to have despatched him. Many who believe that the unfortunate prince was strangled are persuaded that Teplow[4] held one end of the

[1] *Russian Memoranda, Buckinghamshire Papers.*

[2] Elizabeth Romanowna Woronzow, niece to the Grand Chancellor.

[3] Paul, afterwards Czar, November 1796–1802.

[4] Grigori Nicolaevitch Teplow, or Tieplow, held an obscure post in the *chancellerie* until the Revolution, and upon Catherine's accession became one of her Secretaries of State. He composed the declaration which Catherine issued on the day of that event. It has been pointed out that if he was indeed the murderer of her husband, Catherine's complicity was made more probable, as Teplow was too

cord. Yet Candour may doubt whether his successor meant his death, or at least suppose that she did not absolutely consent to it. It is not, however, to be imagined that so critical an event was natural, but she probably concealed her suspicions and winked at the barbarous zeal of those friends who perhaps upon that occasion consulted as much their own safety as hers.'

Meantime Catherine had no time for remorse. There were her supporters to be rewarded and satisfied; there were incipient conspiracies to be suppressed. One party was for giving the crown to Catherine's son; another for bringing forth the imprisoned Ivan and restoring him to the throne of his fathers. For some months after her accession her position was, no doubt, extremely precarious.

Keith's despatch of July 12 carries on the narrative of events as they immediately succeeded upon the Revolution.

Mr. Keith to Mr. Grenville.[1]

[EXTRACT.[2]]

St. Petersburg: July 12, 1762.

I have the honour to transmit to you the manifesto published by authority, with the translation, in which you will see that great stress is laid upon the shameful peace concluded with their enemy, notwithstanding which, as Baron Goltz,[3] who attended the Emperor to the last, was returning to town, he was met on the road by M. Alsuffiew, who, by order of the Empress, assured him that he had nothing to fear, and that he might either return to Oranienbaum for a day or two, or proceed to Petersburg, a proper escort being

obscure to gain anything by committing the deed on his own responsibility. More generally the crime has been ascribed to Alexis Orlow, whose family had everything to gain by the triumph of Catherine. See Schuhmacher's *Geschichte der Thronentsetzung und des Todes Peter des Dritten*, as quoted by Waliszewski. 'Perhaps Nature never formed a more villainous countenance than that of Teplow,' writes Lord Buckinghamshire, 'or one whose character was more consonant to his appearance' (*Russian Memoranda*).

[1] *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

[2] The rest of this letter has been printed in the *Memoirs of Sir Robert Murray Keith*, by Mrs. Smith, vol. i.

[3] The Prussian envoy.

appointed to attend him at either place; but he, choosing the town, is now at his house here in perfect freedom, and, what is most remarkable, M. Alsuffiew assured him that the Empress was perfectly well disposed towards cultivating his Prussian Majesty's friendship. The Hetman was, I hear, with General Villebois and M. Panin, the great Duke's Governor, the principal persons in bringing about this revolution, and under them the brothers Orlow [1] were the most trusted and the most active; but the most singular circumstance of the whole is that the place of rendezvous was the house of the Princess Dashkow,[2] a young lady not above twenty years old, daughter to Count Roman Larevonetz Woronzow, sister to the late favourite Elizabeth, and niece to the Chancellor. It is certain that she bore a principal share in contriving and carrying on the conspiracy, from the beginning to the conclusion of it.

Of all men the Hetman seemed to possess the greatest share of the unfortunate Emperor's affection, and two days before his fall he dined at Marshal Rosamowsky's country house, and was, upon that occasion, received and served with the greatest marks of duty, zeal, and attachment on the part of both brothers; and when he returned to Oranienbaum the Hetman went straight to Peterhof to concert matters with the Empress. It is a dispute what part the Chamberlain, Shouvalow, had in this affair.

On Friday evening, before the Empress left the town, she despatched an officer to bring back Count Bestucheff to Petersburg, and it is thought he will have a considerable share in the administration. In the meantime M. Panin [3] is the person that takes most upon him, though both the Chancellor, Count Woronzow,[4]

[1] Ivan Grigorievitch Orlow (1732), Grigori (1734–1783), Alexis (1735–1807), Vladimir (1748–1831), Feodor, were all sons of Grigori Ivanovitch Orlow, who was a colonel in the army of Peter the Great. Four of the brothers were concerned in the Revolution of 1762, their influence with the four regiments of the Guards having practically ensured its success. Ivan became Count and Senator after that event. Grigori was already Catherine's lover. He was supremely handsome, '*avec une adorable tête d'ange sur les épaules*,' but with little else angelic about him. He was a man of little intelligence or education, and led to excess the usual life of a dissipated officer of the Guards. He became Grand Master of Artillery, Director-General of Fortifications, and finally Catherine procured for him the title of Prince of the Empire. Alexis, surnamed *le Balafré*, became Admiral, and distinguished himself by the destruction of the Turkish fleets at Tchesmé (1770). Vladimir, in 1793, was made Director of the Academy of Science.

[2] See p. 99. [3] See p. 96. [4] See p. 94.

and the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Galitzin,[1] continue in their places; the former came to town on Friday evening, and, going directly to Court, was tolerably well received and promised the Empress's protection. However, at his own desire he had two officers of the Guards put about him for the first two days, but now they are taken off, and he goes on in the functions of his office. His lady was not at Court till Sunday (having continued with the Emperor till the end, and having even been at Cronstadt with him), and when she kissed the Empress's hand she took off her riband of St. Catherine, and, offering it to her Imperial Majesty, said she had never asked for it, and now laid it at her feet; but the Empress most obligingly took it, and with her own hand put it again over the Countess Woronzow's shoulder.

With regard to the motives of this Revolution, it is plain that the taking away the Church lands was the principal, joined to the neglect of the clergy. The next was the severe discipline which the Emperor endeavoured to introduce amongst the troops, especially the Guards, who had been accustomed to great idleness and licence, and the discontent amongst them was heightened by the Resolution his Imperial Majesty had taken of carrying a great part of that corps into Germany with him in his expedition against Denmark, which was a measure disagreeable to the whole nation, who stomached not greatly their being drawn into new expenses and new dangers for recovering the Duchy of Schleswig,[2] which they considered a trifling object in itself, and entirely indifferent to Russia; and this after the Emperor had just sacrificed the conquests made by the Russian arms (and which might have been of great importance to this Empire) to his friendship for the King of Prussia, which, however, their desires of peace would have made them not only put up with, but approve. Several other little circumstances, greatly exaggerated and artfully represented and improved, contributed to the fall of this unhappy Prince, who had many excellent qualities, and who never did a violent or cruel action

[1] See p. 52, note 3. Prince Galitzin had returned from his mission to England early in 1762. His appointment as Vice-Chancellor had been confirmed by Peter III., and he entered upon that office in July. (Keith to Bute, Jan. 19 and July 20, 1762, R.O. *Précis Russia*, 1761–63.)

[2] Peter III. claimed Schleswig as his hereditary possession as Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, and this province had been conquered by the Kings of Denmark in the great Northern War.

in the course of his short reign; but who, from an abhorrence to business, owing to a bad education and the unhappy choice of favourites who encouraged him in it, let everything run into confusion, and by a mistaken notion he had conceived of having secured the affections of the nation by the great favours he had so nobly bestowed on them after his first mounting the throne, fell into an indolence and security that proved fatal to him.

To conclude, not only I, but several persons of sense and discernment thought they could perceive latterly in this Prince a considerable change from what he was for some months after his accession, and that the perpetual hurry in which he lived, and the flattery he met with from the vile people about him, had in some measure affected his understanding.

I must own that I had no apprehension that this Revolution would happen so soon, but I was always of opinion that if he left his dominions he ran a great risk of never returning to them, and for that reason I made use of every means I could think of to divert him from that expedition. Sometimes by insinuations to himself, and sometimes by representing the danger to others who had the honour to approach his person—whether they did their duty on this point, particularly Prince George, I cannot say; but if they did, the event has shown that it was all to no purpose.

July 13.

Last night about ten o'clock I received a message from the Master of the Ceremonies, desiring me to be at Court this morning at eleven; and having gone thither, accordingly, I found great numbers of people, and amongst the rest my brethren the foreign Ministers, and we were soon after carried into the Empress's apartment, and presented to her by the Chancellor. In kissing her Imperial Majesty's hand I took the opportunity of wishing her a happy reign and making her a proper compliment in the King's name, which was kindly received and returned in very handsome terms; and upon the whole my reception was very good.

I could observe the countenances of some of my brethren considerably changed for the better, particularly those of the Danish envoy [1] and of the Imperial ambassador.[2] *A propos* to the last, orders

[1] 'Count Haxthausen, a very honest gentleman, with very good, tho' not very quick, parts, perfectly well disposed to England, an enemy to France.' (*Buckinghamshire Papers, Keith's Notes.*)

[2] Florimond Claude, Comte de Mercy-Argenteau, born at Liége 1722. In 1756

have already been sent to Count Czernichew forthwith to leave the Prussian army and return into Prussia, and at the same time orders were likewise despatched to General Panin to go and take the command of General Romanzow's army and to bring it back likewise into Prussia. All this gives some people the notion that this Court may have entertained some thoughts of keeping the whole or some part of that country, notwithstanding the late peace.

There was likewise a good deal of difference to be observed in the faces of the courtiers—some for the better, some for the worse. Those who seemed to make the most important figure were the Hetman, M. Panin, and that gentleman, M. Orlow, whom I mentioned in the former part of this letter. He is made Knight of St. Alexander and Chambellan.

Amongst the ladies, the Princess Dashkow was distinguished by the Order of St. Catherine, the Empress having given her the riband she wore herself, before she put on the blue. Her father and sister [1] are under confinement in Count Roman's own house. It is said that the Emperor, in making his terms, desired only three things—his own life, and grace for his favourite lady and for his adjutant-brigadier Godowitz, who is likewise under arrest. . . .

he had accompanied Kaunitz to Paris, and assisted at the conclusion of the Treaty of Versailles, which reversed so completely the policy of France and of Austria. 'M. Mercy is a creature and admirer of Kaunitz, but otherwise a worthy man,' writes Keith (*Buckinghamshire Papers*).

[1] Elizabeth Woronzow was allowed to retire to one of her father's villages, and married later M. Palianski. The children of Roman Larevonetz (or Ilarionovitch) Woronzow, brother of the Grand Chancellor, Michael Ilarionovitch Woronzow, were Alexander, who became Chancellor of the Empire; Simon, or Semen (1744–1832), ambassador in England (1762–1763); Marie, afterwards Countess Bouterlin; Elizabeth, who was the mistress of Peter III.; Catherine (1744–1810), who became the celebrated Princess Dashkow. The two elder sisters were Maids of Honour to the Czarina Elizabeth. Catherine became for a short time the favourite of Catherine II. See *Mémoires de la Princesse Dashkoff*, edited by Mrs. Bradford; *Recueil des Instructions, etc.*, vol. ii. 4, etc.

A Succinct View of the State of Russia[1]

1762

The present Revolution, which has occasioned the Death of the Emperor Peter III[d], was actually planned before his Accession. For some time after the Commencement of the War the Grand Duke and Dutchess acted cordially together, and in Consequence thereto were both in Disgrace with the late Czarina, and it was a Correspondence with them to dissolve the strict Connection with Vienna and Versailles that ruined Count Bestucheff. The very Persons who sent him into Exile immediately resumed his Plan, and reconciled themselves to the Great Duke and Dutchess.

At the Head of these was Iwan Iwanowitz Shouvalow and his Cousin the Veldt Marshal Peter, who was reputed as wise a Man as any in that Empire. Their Scheme for their greater Security was to have the Empress declared Empress Regent and not barely Consort. All this was overthrown by Prince Trubetskoy,[2] a plain, sensible loyal Person, who, being at the Head of the Guards, received and proclaimed the Grand Duke the Moment the late Czarina expired.

From the Consideration of this, the Revolution will appear indeed less sudden, but the Causes of it will be much better understood than from any of the Accounts that I have seen. It having been said, and I think said with Truth, that the late Emperor laboured to depose himself; but who taught him to labour? Some who were about him, no doubt. And who taught them? In order to shew that they were taught and he was imposed upon, one Instance will serve as well as a hundred.

Horses were wanted to remount the Cavalry. It was suggested to the Emperor that the Clergy had upon their Estates very

[1] This survey of the political situation is preserved among Lord Buckinghamshire's papers, but is evidently by some person much more intimately acquainted than he could himself have been at that time with the state of things at St. Petersburg.

[2] Nikita Jourievitch Trubetzkoi (1699–1767), Field Marshal and President of the War Department. He was described in the instructions given to M. de Breteuil as 'well versed in Russian affairs and incapable of corruption.' See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 179.

fine Studs, and upon this Suggestion they were seized at once. The thing was pushed farther. The Horses in their Stables, and even the Bishops' Coach Horses were seized, so that they could not come to Court. When the Emperor was apprized of this, he ordered the Horses to be sent back, but that did not efface the Memory of the Insult. Every Order he gave was executed in this Manner, and a Man who meant as well as a Man could mean, was by these Acts rendered generally odious.

Amongst those who were involved in Bestucheff's Disgrace [1] was the Councillor Adaduroff, a Man whose Abilities would have done Honour to any Country; and therefore it is not at all wonderful they raised him to a lucrative Employment, and that to a great Match in Russia. He understood German, French, and Italian, & was appointed to teach the Grand Dutchess Russ, which She speaks with the greatest Delicacy & Correctness, as I have hinted upon a former Occasion. This Gentleman was her Tutor and her Oracle; he is already recalled, and in whatever Post he may be placed he will in Effect govern the Empire.

He has a very sound Head, a very comprehensive Knowledge, and a very great Respect for the British Nation. His only Fault, tho' he is very Rich, is the love of Money. Sir Charles Williams, the first time he conversed with Him, said: 'Is it possible you should never have travelled?' To which he answered: 'Your Excellency, it seems, thinks it impossible that common Sense should grow in Russia.'

Catharine II[d] is at once a very sensible and a very showy Princess. She has an Air of Dignity in her Presence inspired by a Soul that knows, as well as loves, to command. After Adaduroff was sent into Banishment her Chief Confident was Count Panin, Governor to the Grand Duke her Son, a Man of moderate Parts, but for that Country a Man of extensive Learning. With his Assistance She applied herself to Geography, History, and Politics, and has a good general Idea of the several Countries and Princes in Europe, and a very just Notion of the true Interests of Russia.

She never had, any more than her Consort, any Connections with the Empress Queen, & was very far from having any Aversion to the King of Prussia. She disapproved the late War heartily, but she did not absolutely approve of the late Peace, perhaps not

[1] In 1759. See pp. 37 and 38.

more for her being very little consulted, at least by the Emperor Himself, tho' during His whole Reign She knew much more of the Inside of things than he did. But, however, Events will shew that these are her real Sentiments. She is certainly no perfect Character, & perhaps the best Description of Her is, that she is a Woman as well as an Empress. For the present perhaps the Woman may have as much to say as the Empress, but if She lives & reigns a few years the Empress will get the better of the Woman. She may possibly appear superior to Her Namesake Catharine the First.

It is a very groundless Error that She has an Aversion to the House of Holstein. Her Mother was of that House.[1] Prince George is related to her as well as the Emperor. She never confined Him but with a View to protect Him, and has actually offered him the Regency of Holstein. A full Proof of this appears from an Application of Her's to Sir Chas. Williams when She was Grand Dutchess.

The King of Denmark sollicited the Chapter of Lubec to elect a Prince of his House Coadjutor. The Princess told Sir Charles of this, not only with Chagrin but Passion. 'He is not content,' said *She*, 'with keeping Our Patrimony from Us, but would gradually deprive Us of the few Resources we have left, that the Princes of Our Family by becoming Beggars may become Burthens upon Russia. I must tell your Exc^{y}. I know not how to hinder, and much less to bear this.'

She has both a Fear & a Hatred of France. Her Consort when Grand Duke, opposed in his plain open Way the Receiving a French Ambassador.

The late Czarina desired the Grand Dutchess might be sounded on that Head: She said with great Modesty, that these were things with which She never chose to meddle; that the Grand Duke was very positive, and that She remembered to hear him say (which by the Way he never said) that the coming of a French Minister to Petersburg was generally followed by a Revolution.

This startled the Czarina so much, that if it had not been for the prevailing Interest of the Empress Queen a French Ambassador had never been admitted. It may be collected from hence

[1] She was Jeanne Elizabeth of Holstein-Eutin, a sister of Adolphus Frederic, who became King of Sweden, 1751–1771. Her father was hereditary Bishop of Lübeck.

that unless Events after her Disposition, She is not like to quarrel with the King of Prussia, to be directed by the Court of Vienna, or to enter into any close Correspondence with the Court of Versailles. She will probably study to live well with all Three.

There seems to be a Contradiction in the Accounts from Petersburg of the Aversion shewn by the Russians to the late War, and the yet stronger Dislike to the last Peace. But the Russians are so barbarous as to love no Country but their own.

They had no Ambition to conquer Prussia; but after it was conquered and the Streets of Petersburg swarmed with cripples who had lost their Limbs in making that Conquest, they were so stupid as not to see the Rectitude of giving it up. However, they would have been enough reconciled to the Peace if the German and the Danish War had not taken Place. 'What,' said they, 'have these Quarrels to do with Russia? Must We fight more Battles to no purpose or for the Purposes of other People? Why will not Our Czar be content with the finest Empire in the World, and live himself, & let us live in Peace?' The English Merchants at Petersburg know that this was the Language of the People while the Rejoicings were making for the perpetual Peace with Prussia.

To conclude with the Characters of the principal Persons now upon the Scene. The High Chancellor Woronzow is an infirm Man, and was never very Active, so that the Weight of Business lies at Present upon Prince Galitzin, who was lately Minister here. Veldt Marshal Rosamowsky[1] is a good natured Man, whose strength of Body is worn out; as to Faculties of the Mind, he never had any. His Brother, the Hetman of the Cossacks (of which Nation they both are), is more lively, with some Parts, but is governed by the Counsellor Teplow, a Man who has some Abilities but no

[1] Cyril Grigorievitch Rozoumowski (1728–1803), Hetman of the Cossacks of the Dnieper. He was the last to hold that office, which under Catherine II. was replaced by a College of Administration. He was a Cossack of humble birth, and owed his success in life to his brother, Alexis Rozoumowski (1709–1771), who, from being a chorister in the Court chapel, became the lover of the Grand Duchess, afterwards the Empress, Elizabeth. Elizabeth advanced her lover to the highest posts. On the day of her coronation he was made General-in-Chief and Knight of St. Andrew, and soon after Elizabeth privately married him. In 1756 he became Field Marshal; but he had already been superseded in Elizabeth's private favour by Ivan Ivanovitch Shouvalow. *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 9; Bilbassof's *Histoire de Catherine*, vol. i.

Principles. Count Bestucheff, if he has any Remains of Health, will certainly be employed, and Count Panin will have a great Share in the Management of Affairs, but Counsellor Adaduroff will have the Empress's Confidence if the new Ministers suffer him to come to Court. Marshal Soltikow [1] will be at the Head of the Army, but that Army will probably remain at Home, and the Empress, in order to regulate her Domestic Concerns effectually, will use her utmost Endeavours to live upon good Terms with all her Neighbours, and will from Inclination as well as Interest cultivate a close Understanding with Great Britain.

Rumours of revolution were still in the air when the Earl of Buckinghamshire reached the scene of these events; and at Copenhagen he had been warned that it would be advisable for him to remain there incognito until matters had become more settled. He persevered, however, and reached St. Petersburg on September 23.

It is significant of the reputation of Russian Ministers at that time that the ambassador was accredited with the sum of 50,000*l.*, for the proper employment of which he was to receive further orders, or even, should necessity arise, to employ it at his own discretion, with all possible caution and frugality.[2]

The Empress had already, through her Minister [3] in London, made the strongest professions of friendship towards England; and the English Government had every reason to believe that the treaties of alliance and commerce which Lord Buckinghamshire was instructed to propose would be eagerly welcomed by a sovereign whose position must still be so precarious, and who had such personal obligations to the King of England.

[1] Count Peter Semenovitch Soltikow (1700–1772). He commanded the Russian forces during the last years of the Seven Years' War, and conquered Frederic himself at the Battle of Kunersdorf (1759). *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 90.

[2] Keith had received 100,000*l.* See Smith's *Memoirs of Sir R. M. Keith.*

[3] Simon Romanovitch Woronzow (1744–1832), nephew to the Grand Chancellor

II

EXTRACTS FROM THE

DESPATCHES, CORRESPONDENCE, AND MEMORANDA

OF

JOHN, SECOND EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

DURING HIS EMBASSY TO ST. PETERSBURG

1762–1765

Despatch from the Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Grenville.

St. Petersburg: September 24, 1762.

Sir,—

I arrived here late last night a good deal fatigued with the latter part of my passage. The Court and everybody belonging to it are gone to Moscow, and the Sunday after next is fixed for the Coronation. It will be impossible for me to get there Time enough to be present at that ceremony, as my equipages, baggage, and servants are not yet on shore, nor is there any house yet ready for me at Moscow. I am also informed that the roads are very bad, and the horses so much fatigued with the concourse of people who have lately travelled that way, as to make any degree of expedition impracticable. I hope, however, to be there in two or three days after the ceremony. Orders had been given by the Empress to show every mark of attention to his Majesty's ambassador upon his arrival at Cronstadt. I have delivered your despatches to Mr. Keith.

The Same to the Same.

St. Petersburg: October 1, 1762.

I was very happy to receive in your letter of the 31st of August the confirmation of his Majesty's having appointed the Duke of Bedford to proceed immediately to Paris as his ambassador.

Upon my first coming here, by Mr. Keith's advice I notified by my secretary my arrival to M. Neplujew, the first of the senators left here. He sent me a guard immediately, and his compliments, with many offers of civility, but pleaded sickness as his excuse for not visiting me. He has since invited me to dine with him upon the Great Duke's birthday; but as I have reason to believe his sickness was only pretended,[1] and my instructions and the ceremonial given to ambassadors here mention that I should

[1] When a Russian is in the least mortified or embarrassed with his situation he immediately pretends to be taken ill, and shuts himself up. *Russian Memoranda, Buckinghamshire Papers.*

pay the first visit to no person but the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, I declined the invitation. Marshal Münnich[1] sent word to Mr. Keith that if my arrival were notified to him he would immediately wait upon me. General Korffe[2] has also been with me, and I have returned their visits. Marshal Münnich is the finest old man I ever saw. He told me he formerly had the honour of serving in the pay of Great Britain, and that he should ever retain the most cordial affection for that country. I got my baggage on shore yesterday, and it is now under the inspection of the Custom House officers. It is not in my power to say what day I shall be able to set out for Moscow. All the next week is to be kept as holidays in honour of the Coronation, which will make it more difficult for me to get horses upon the road. I must trust to his Majesty's goodness for believing that this delay is not my fault. Mr. Keith will be so good, on his return to England, to explain the many difficulties which have attended me, and must still attend me, in my journey to Moscow and upon my arrival there, as this country has none of the conveniences which are found elsewhere.

The Same to the Same.

October 5, 1762.

Sunday, being the day appointed for the Coronation of the Empress, was celebrated as a high festival. The illuminations and other rejoicings were repeated last night. I propose to set out for Moscow on Saturday morning.

[1] Keith describes Münnich's return to St. Petersburg in January 1762, when he appeared to be in good health and with all his faculties intact. He showed himself not ungrateful to the master who recalled him from exile, and would have saved Peter if he could have been saved. When Catherine saw him after the Revolution, she said: 'Vous avez voulu combattre contre moi?' 'Oui, madame,' answered the Field Marshal; 'pouvais-je moins faire pour celui qui m'a délivré de ma captivité?' Catherine had greatness of mind enough not to resent his fidelity, and showed him great favour. She was accustomed to say: 'Si Münnich n'est pas un des enfants de Russie, il en est un des pères.' But she allowed him no influence in the Government, and he employed the leisure hours of his last years in writing his Memoirs, which were at his death consigned to the Imperial archives, and have never seen the light. He died in 1767. See Halem's 'Vie du Comte de Münnich,' *Nouvelle Biographie générale*, &c. See also Introduction, p. 12, and note.

[2] One of the many Germans in the service of Russia. He had been Russian envoy to Copenhagen. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

The Same to the Same.

St. Petersburg: October 6, 1762.

In the few days I have been at this place, as the Court has been absent, it has not been possible for me to obtain any great intelligence. One fact, however, I may venture to mention to you, and that from authority which, I have reason to believe, may absolutely be depended upon. It is that immediately after the late Revolution here the Empress sent an express to Poniatowski to forbid his coming into Russia, but assuring him at the same time of her unceasing regard and friendship; that even in case the crown of Poland should become vacant she would use her best endeavours to procure it for him, or, if that were not possible, for one of the Czartoryski[1] family. Mr. Keith, upon his return to England, will acquaint you with further particulars. I have since heard that the King of Poland[2] is very ill, which is said to be the reason of the Russian army's being ordered to stop in that country. I shall use my utmost endeavours to be able, in a little time after my arrival at Moscow, to send you an authentic account of the state of this country, but am a good deal concerned at the not having any messenger with me, as it will be difficult for me to find a safe conveyance for any intelligence of a delicate nature. At present it appears to me, from such observations as I have had any opportunity of making, that the people are uneasy and fluctuating; the Court sensible of it, and alarmed. There is some reason to believe that the Empress will return in a few weeks to this place, but the opinions here upon that and every other head vary every day.

Letter from the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Countess of Suffolk.

Dear Madam,— Moscow: October 21, 1762.

A great deal of fasting, some praying, nine days and as many nights through the most detestable roads in the universe, covered

[1] The Czartoryski, an illustrious family of Poland, were rich and powerful enough to be able to raise at their own cost an army of 5,000 men. The two brothers, Michael, Grand Chancellor of Lithuania, and Augustus Alexander, were the heads of the House; their nephews were Prince Adam and Stanislas Poniatowski, a son of their sister. The family had recently had a deadly feud with Prince Radzivill, and, despairing to obtain justice from Augustus III., who favoured their enemy, appealed for help to Catherine II. It was at their request that a Russian army had entered Poland. St. Priest, *Études Diplomatiques*, p. 57.

[2] Augustus III., Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, 1733–1763.

with snow just enough froze to let us through, brought us yesterday to Moscow, where we found ourselves in a most wretched, ruinous house, furnished with no fixtures nor any movables but rats and buggs, detestable animals in themselves; and yet I pity even them when I consider what they hourly suffer from the inclemency of the weather. This most desirable mansion was hired for me by a friendly countryman of mine, who, to make it sure, has paid half a year's rent beforehand. If any other is to be had I will not remain in it. I did not come into this country with any view of pleasure and indulgence to myself; nor should I regard living in a dirty cold room when I was employed in the service of my sovereign, but it is a little mortification to me that, after having made every preparation that the short notice would admit of, to appear as an English ambassador ought, I shall have no power of making use of them, and, spending all the King's appointments and a good deal of my own income, shall make no appearance suitable to such an expense. The Imperial ambassador and the French minister have very good houses here; the other ministers are not very much better off than myself, but then, as they are only of the second order, the same number of servants and method of living is not expected of them. I will, however, try to laugh at what I cannot remedy, and attempt at least to acquit myself with credit of the commission that is entrusted to me. My brother[1] is a good deal out of spirits; he has been used to a cheerfuller life for some time past, but I hope use and reflection will make it easier to him. I have but little assistance in any respect from my own family, which obliges me to attend to details which I could often wish to avoid, but in a little time I hope they will all be better settled. I ought not to have wrote to you till I had seen the Empress and her Court, but my vanity told me you would be glad to hear this journey was accomplished. I wait with great impatience for my English letters, as I hope they will tell me that a good peace is concluded, and I have some anxiety for the fate of the expedition to the Havannah.

Your ever affectionate nephew,

BUCKINGHAM.

[1] George Hobart, afterwards third Earl of Buckinghamshire.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Grenville.

Sir,— Moscow: October 21, 1762.

I arrived at this place yesterday morning. The journey was a very disagreeable one, and, with all the expedition which could possibly be made, took up nine days. The news of Lady Buckinghamshire's[1] death, and my brother not being well, detained me at Petersburg a day and a half longer than I intended.

In order to make amends as much as possible for the many unfortunate delays which have happened, I sent my secretary in the afternoon to Prince Galitzin, the Vice-Chancellor (the Chancellor[2] is gone into the country for some days, but a gentleman has been with me with his compliments), and to the Master of the Ceremonies. Prince Galitzin's secretary waited upon me this morning with his compliments, and I have since been with him and have given him the copy of my credentials and of the compliment that I propose to make to her Imperial Majesty upon my first audience. He seemed to wish that I had made it in French, as he said then the Empress could have answered me in the same language. I said that my instructions were that it should be in English. Upon my taking leave, he told me 'qu'il était charmé que j'étais arrivé ici dans un temps où sa Cour se trouvait dans des dispositions si heureuses à l'égard de la mienne.'

The Master of the Ceremonies is to let me know when I am to have an audience, which is to be private. It will in all probability be very soon, as the Empress goes the next week a progress to several monasteries.

The Court is certainly in great confusion. Several people have been lately taken up, amongst others Ismaelow, a colonel of the Guards, and the troops are turbulent and riotous; yet, as they have no head to resort to, it is consequently natural to suppose that the disturbance must soon subside. If the dispositions of the Government are such as they are represented, I am sure it ought to be the wish of every Englishman that no alteration may happen in the present establishment. The Great Duke is in a very bad state of health, and the Empress is said to be greatly altered by the cares and constant anxiety of mind she has lately laboured under. All the letters here are opened. I had a most polite message yesterday, by an English merchant, from Count Mercy, the

[1] His step-mother. [2] Woronzow. See p. 94, note.

Imperial ambassador. M. de Breteuil does not yet go to Court; the reasons of it have already been explained to you in a letter of Mr. Keith's. The Spanish minister expects orders from his Court every day, that will put him in the same situation. Breteuil, I am informed, in his conversation speaks of the peace as concluded.

[The French Government had seen, not altogether with disfavour, Peter III.'s extravagant admiration for Frederic the Great, because it tended to separate the two Imperial Courts, whose close union they dreaded. Nevertheless, the Revolution had not been unwelcome, for Catherine, in spite of her disagreeable experiences from French influence in St. Petersburg, had not failed to profess for the French Government a judicious degree of attachment, before her accession.[1]

M. de Breteuil, however, had not known how to use his opportunities. His position, as we have seen, was from the first of peculiar difficulty. The Duc de Choiseul would have accepted a direct alliance with Russia, but Louis XV., who in his secret diplomacy was sometimes disposed to subordinate the interests of France to those of Poland, had given Breteuil to understand that these were not to be neglected, and since Elizabeth had made 'the rectification of the Polish frontier' a condition of the treaty, the matter had fallen through altogether.[2] The secret instructions had further involved M. de Breteuil in a correspondence with Elizabeth which could scarcely have been pleasing to Catherine if by ill-fortune it had fallen into her hands.[3] The death of Elizabeth, therefore, had been the signal for him to ask for leave, in order that he might place his papers in safety. On the eve of his departure he had hints of the conspiracy which was about to break forth, and was even appealed to by Catherine for funds to further her enterprise. M. de Breteuil had hesitated, had evaded the demand, and had finally promised the money only on condition that Catherine

[1] Flassan, vi. 352; *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française.*
[2] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 182.
[3] *Le Secret du Roi*, par le Duc de Broglie, ii. 18.

should send him a written token that the request was really hers, and on June 25 had left St. Petersburg almost at the moment of the Revolution, leaving only a *chargé d'affaires* at the embassy.

Catherine wrote in answer to the tardy offer of money: 'L'emplette que nous devions faire se fera sûrement bientôt, mais à beaucoup meilleur marché, aussi on n'a pas besoin d'autre fonds,' and thenceforth ceased any communication with the French embassy.[1]

M. de Breteuil learnt the success of the Revolution at Warsaw, and nevertheless proceeded to Vienna, returning only to St. Petersburg on September 4, in time to attend Catherine at her coronation. The reprimands which he subsequently received from Versailles were in proportion to the enormity of his diplomatic crime. He was ordered to inform Catherine how strongly his Government had disapproved of his proceeding, and to express the King's regret that his Minister had so signally failed to represent his Majesty's sentiments. M. de Breteuil's failure was regarded with the more severity that the French Government was desirous of standing well with Russia, though still upon their own terms; and they were besides in great fear lest the Austrian ambassador should have better known how to make use of his opportunities, for the still smouldering jealousy of Austria made any renewal of the alliance between the two Imperial Courts an object of dread to France. Once more Louis XV. had written to M. de Breteuil 'que l'unique objet de ma politique avec la Russie est de l'éloigner autant qu'il sera possible des affaires de l'Europe'; and with this object Breteuil was to encourage the formation of parties; he was even, if possible, to get into communication with Prince Ivan, to find out what following he was likely to have under the new reign, and to watch with interest the growth of the republican tendencies which it was rumoured had begun to show themselves among the Russian nobles. 'Tout ce qui peut plonger la Russie dans le chaos et la

[1] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 196.

faire rentrer dans l'obscurité est avantageux à mes intérêts,' continues this curious despatch,[1] one of those which Louis XV. himself sends to the agent of this secret diplomacy.

In addition to the difficulties which had resulted from M. de Breteuil's ill-timed departure from St. Petersburg, questions of ceremonial in the matter of the Imperial title [2] had put a stop for the present to his reception at Court, and altogether his position had become one of so much difficulty that he had decided upon soliciting his recall.]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Grenville.

Sir,— Moscow: October 25, 1762.

I had the honour yesterday of my first private audience of the Empress, to which I was conducted by the Master of the Ceremonies in one of her Majesty's coaches; the whole ceremony was according to a form which they showed me, and assured me was what they never deviated from with regard to any ambassador. After I had presented his Majesty's credential letter, I made my compliment in English, of which I have enclosed a copy,[3] and hope it will meet with his Majesty's approbation. The Empress answered me in Russ. I have asked for a translation of it, and am told I shall have it.

In the evening there was a Drawing-room, and a concert of music. I had the honour of playing at picket with her Majesty. She asked me a great many questions about England; and upon the whole her behaviour to me, both then and at my audience, was extremely gracious.

[1] See 'Le Comte de Choiseul au Baron de Breteuil,' August 9, 1762; 'Louis XV. à M. de Breteuil,' September 10, 1762. *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 197 *et seq.*

[2] See pages 108–110.

[3] After the usual congratulation the ambassador was directed to assure Catherine 'of the King of England's affectionate esteem for those eminent qualities which adorn her, and of his determined resolution to omit nothing which may tend to cultivate that harmony and confidential friendship which appear to him so essentially necessary to the mutual interests and well-being of the two nations.'

The Same to the Same.

[*Separate and secret.*]

Sir,— Moscow: October 25, 1762.

Enclosed is the Empress' answer to the letter of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales,[1] which I had the honour of giving her yesterday. I received it from Prince Galitzin, to whom I went this morning, that the first opportunity might be taken of communicating to the Empress (in pursuance of my secret and separate instructions) those papers relative to the pacification of that part of the war in Germany in which England is concerned. I asked when I might have an opportunity of showing them to the Empress. He told me that though the late Emperor had sometimes received papers himself, her present Majesty chose rather to have them conveyed through the channel of her ministers. I thought it better not to *opiniâtrer* a point which could essentially make no difference, and therefore left them with him. He told me that he did not think that England had any great reason to be satisfied with the King of Prussia or his ministers in London, to the latter part of which I rather assented. He added that he had received accounts from Berlin that his Prussian Majesty was less disposed to peace than ever, that he has lately drawn twenty thousand recruits from the countries which the Russian armies had evacuated. And, further, that his Prussian Majesty had, notwithstanding the long duration of the war, hitherto kept his own treasure untouched, and that he was supplied by money from England, tho' the subsidy treaty had not been renewed the last year. I assured him that, so far as related to England, I did not believe there could be the least foundation for such a report. I then mentioned that I had, by his Majesty's instructions, to sound the disposition of this Court in relation to a renewal of the Treaty of Alliance of 1742, with such alterations as the change of situation of affairs might make necessary. He answered with great coldness, 'Yes; I think that treaty is expired.' Lastly, I told him that whenever it was agreeable to his Court I was fully prepared to enter upon the plan of a new treaty of commerce, to which he said immediately: 'I understand Mr. Keith had a project given him.' I was telling him that, by what I had heard of that project, it was so repugnant to the laws of England and to the interests of the Russia Company that it was impossible to

[1] The Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, mother of George III.

proceed upon it, when we were interrupted. Their plan of a treaty is so much and so justly objected to in the Report of the Board of Trade, to which my instructions referred me, that it appears to me better not to enter into any discussion of it at all, but either to offer our own new one or to set out upon the old treaty and get as many alterations in favour of the company as possible. I think it my duty to acquaint his Majesty that, however in general I might be flattered with the reception that has in other instances been given me, there was a very unpleasant coldness in Prince Galitzin's behaviour this morning. It seems to me expedient at this time not to appear too solicitous about either of the treaties, as this Court will be the less disposed to come into them. I shall particularly avoid being pressing in relation to the Treaty of Commerce till I am honoured with his Majesty's commands in answer to my despatch from St. Petersburg of October 1. The Empress seems to have a settled melancholy upon her countenance. She mentioned to me last night in conversation that she had lately found herself absent in company, and that the habit of it imperceptibly grew upon her, she knew not why.

May I beg the favour of you that when you deliver the enclosed letter you would lay me at the feet of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, and mention that the Empress took an opportunity of expressing the most particular regard for her?

Summary of a Report of the Russia Company (24 *Nov.* 1762).

[1. Foreigners in general were not permitted to trade with one another, but only with Russians, while Russians in England were free to trade with persons of any nation. The English merchant in Russia might not transport his goods to such places as he pleased, and in all cases had to pay a heavy inland duty, from both which restrictions Russians in England were free. If every place could not be made free to English merchants ('Russians being influenced by very contracted notions of commerce'), the Company petitioned at least that at ports of importation and places of residence of British merchants the privilege of sale to whom they would—or, failing that, at least to English merchants—should be allowed them.

2. The Persian trade through Russia was now prohibited, the Russians being extremely resentful of the conduct of Captain Elton, the first promoter of it, as well as excessively jealous of the Persians acquiring any maritime power upon the Caspian. This trade had been permitted by the treaty of 1734, and was now specially desired.

3. A third grievance was that at St. Petersburg English merchants were not permitted to build lighters for transport, while the Russian vessels were 'badly built for the purpose and insufficient in number.'

4. The returning part of the duties upon the exportation (within a certain time) of goods that paid duty being undoubtedly an encouragement to trade, and such returns, or drawbacks, being allowed to the Russian merchants in England, by a parity of reason the English traders in Russia had a right to them.

This last point, as well as the demand for trade with Persia, were not insisted upon, as it was feared that it was almost hopeless to obtain the latter, while the former point was unimportant.[1]]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Grenville.

Sir,— Moscow: November 1, 1762.

Her Imperial Majesty went out of town on Thursday last to visit a convent about forty miles from hence, as an act of devotion.[2] She returned on Saturday night, and I had the honour of making my compliment to her yesterday morning and of playing a picket with her in the evening. As I could not easily give credit to the report mentioned in my despatch of the 28th of the last month in

[1] See Report of the Russia Company to the Board of Trade, November 24, 1762, *Buckinghamshire Papers*.

[2] Catherine had won the confidence of her orthodox subjects by the most scrupulous observance of religious ordinances at a time when Peter III. was alienating them by the grossest disrespect to the clergy, and even by playing fantastic tricks in the churches. 'Il tira la langue, plaisir qu'il se donnait vis-à-vis des prêtres dans l'église,' writes the Princess Dashkow. See *Mémoires de la Princesse Dashkow*, i. 41, 54.

relation to the Empress Queen's having made a requisition of 30,000 auxiliary troops from this Court and the Czarina's having consented to send them, I took an opportunity of asking Baron Goltz, the Prussian minister, if such a story had reached him. He assured me that he had no reason to believe that there was the least foundation for it, and we both agreed in thinking it highly improbable that the Czarina should deprive herself of so large a body of men at this critical juncture, and take a step which must necessarily make a considerable Power her enemy. There has been some pains taken to persuade me to notify my arrival to Count Mercy, the Imperial ambassador, at the same time that I sent to the other foreign ministers; but as the Court of Vienna recalled Count Coloredo [1] from London whilst Mr. Keith still remained at that Court, I thought it would be derogatory from the dignity of his Majesty if his ambassador made the first advances towards any minister of the Empress Queen, and therefore declined it. When I speak of this, excuse my adding how much I wish to have the earliest account of any alteration in the Courts of London and Vienna relative to each other, as I cannot help seeing a probability of their renewing their ancient connection, and of this country being eager to be a party to it. In this, however, I may be greatly mistaken, but cannot omit observing how very expedient it is that the earliest intelligence and the fullest instructions should be sent to his Majesty's ministers in these distant countries where the correspondence is necessarily so tedious, especially in my case, as the little experience I have yet had in business and a proper diffidence in myself must make it unadvisable for me to act in any instance upon my own judgment or to deviate from the letter of my instructions.

I have this moment received an express from Prince Galitzin to acquaint me that he has just received an account by express that the English have taken the Havannah. He concludes by

[1] The Austrian ambassador at London at the time of the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. At the beginning of the hostilities in April 1757 the Empress Queen endeavoured to engage the King of England to a convention of neutrality; and Coleredo went so far as to claim from the Elector of Hanover permission for the Imperial and French troops to pass through Hanover, on the ground that Frederic was infringing the laws of the Empire. The convention was refused by George II., who was already bound by the treaty of 1756 to the King of Prussia. This was the occasion of Coloredo's recall. Flassan, *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française*, vi. 87.

saying that he has the more pleasure in giving me this piece of intelligence as he thinks such an event must forward the conclusion of that peace which is so much wished for here.

The Same to the Same.

Moscow: November 4, 1762.

I must flatter myself that his Majesty will excuse my not being able to give a more particular and a more positive account of the state and dispositions of this Court in these very early days of my residence here, especially if the great disadvantages I labour under are considered. I am totally unacquainted with any former channel of intelligence; and, as to such as I may strike out myself, it will be some time before I can venture to depend upon them. The Prussian[1] and the Danish are the only foreign ministers that have the least good disposition towards England; they are both men of a reserved turn, but I shall cultivate their acquaintance as much as with propriety I can. The two Chancellors, if they are friends to England, it is only so far as they consider us likely to renew our ancient connections with the Austrians, to whom they are devoted. The most distinguished manner, however, in which the Empress has received me would induce me to hope that she herself, diverted from every other consideration, sees England as a great, a glorious, and a powerful kingdom, the natural ally of Russia and the natural enemy to France—a country she ever disliked, and never more than at this juncture. But, even upon this supposition, I am rather of opinion that to carry on his Majesty's views with success I must find some other channel than through the present ostensible ministers. Mon^r. Panin,[2] from his having entirely the care of the Grand Duke, must probably stand high in her opinion; but he is so much confined at present from the sickness of that Prince that I have hardly seen him.

The Same to the Same.

Sir,— Moscow: November 8, 1762.

I was yesterday favoured with yours of the 1st of October, with the Gazette enclosed containing the particulars of the glorious success of his Majesty's arms at the Havannah. The conferences

[1] This was still Baron Goltz, 'a good, genteel young man,' as Keith describes him. His successor was not to show such a friendly disposition to England.

[2] See p. 96 and note.

at the Grand Chancellor's were again put off on Saturday last, nor have I had an opportunity of saying a word upon business to any of the ministers, except that interrupted conversation with the Vice-Chancellor which I mentioned in my despatch of the 25th of the last month. Six officers of the Guards, who have talked a little too freely, are to be broke this morning with ignominy, and afterwards sent for life into some of the distant provinces. They were condemned by the Senate to lose their heads, but the Empress was graciously pleased to spare their lives.

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

My Lord,— St. James's: November 9, 1762.

I write this line with the greatest pleasure to acquaint your Lordship that by a messenger who arrived yesterday from the Duke of Bedford we received the preliminary articles of peace, signed the 3rd inst. at Fontainebleau, between his Grace and the Plenipotentiaries of France and Spain. As this previous agreement will be followed by a cessation of hostilities between the respective armies in the Empire first, and as soon as possible afterwards in all other parts of the world, I congratulate you most sincerely upon this fortunate issue of the King's unwearied endeavours to put an end to the calamities of so long and destructive a war by restoring, so far as has depended on his Majesty, the former happy state of peace and tranquillity.

[*Separate.*]

In addition to what I have written to your Excellency in my other letter of this date, I have the King's orders to direct you to communicate the same immediately to the Empress, and, as a further mark of his Majesty's particular regard and attention, it is his pleasure that you should likewise impart to that Princess the copies which I send you herewith of the first, twelfth, and thirteenth Articles of the preliminary treaty, which are the only ones that have any relation to the war in Germany. Her Imperial Majesty will observe, upon considering the contents of these Articles, the particular attention and concern which the King has shown therein in relation to the interests of his allies, and particularly to those of his Prussian Majesty.

I am also to acquaint your Excellency that although by the words of the treaty the suspension of arms should attend the

ratification of it, yet his Majesty would not defer one minute sending his orders to Prince Ferdinand [1] to concert and settle with the French marshals, who are authorised likewise for the same benevolent purpose by their Court, the means for putting an immediate stop to all hostilities and preventing any further effusion of human blood.

[The first Article as here enclosed was a general declaration of peace between France, Spain, and Great Britain. The twelfth stipulated that France should restore all the country and places belonging to the Elector of Hanover, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Count of Lippe Bückebourg in the same condition in which they were before the war—the cannon even to be restored or replaced, and hostages to return without ransom; the thirteenth, that, immediately after the ratification of the treaty, France should evacuate Cleves, Wesel, and Gueldres, and generally all places belonging to the King of Prussia, and at the same time the French and British forces should evacuate all the places that they occupied in all the Empire, in Westphalia, Lower Saxony, the Upper and Lower Rhine. France and England also promise to furnish no succour of any kind to their respective allies.

In a corrected copy of the thirteenth Article the word *aussitôt* was altered for *aussitôt que faire se pourra*,[2] as the period agreed upon for the evacuation of the Prussian territories; and finally the 15th of the ensuing March was fixed upon as the latest day by which the entire evacuation was to be completed. This correction was communicated in Halifax's despatch of November 12.]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Countess of Suffolk.

Moscow: November 9, 1762.

Six days I pass very much retired, but Sunday shines out my Sabbath day—that day and no other we foreign gentlemen go to

[1] Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who succeeded the Duke of Cumberland, in 1758, in command of the English army upon the Continent.

[2] It should be noted that none of the occupied places in other parts of the

Court. The evening is very agreeable, but all is over by nine o'clock. The Empress's appearance would prejudice you greatly in her favour, but her address much more so. Affability and dignity are blended in her manner, which inspires you at once with ease and respect. When the hurry, the unavoidable consequence of a revolution is over, she has every talent to make this a great and a powerful country. The Russians, as they themselves complain, have very little society amongst them; the men and women mix scarcely even in public places with one another,[1] and are attentive and polite but extremely reserved to strangers, particularly to those who have a public character. I have been long used to other customs, and do not greatly approve these. I shall labour, as far as relates to myself, to break through them, but rather by complaisance and insinuation than by appearing to set the usage of England in opposition to that of Russia. A foreigner, to pass his time agreeably, must suit himself to the country, and not attempt to suit the country to him.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Grenville.

Sir,— Moscow: November 15, 1762.

There was a conference on Saturday at the Chancellor's, at which the Vice-Chancellor, as is the usage here, was present. . . . All the foreign ministers were there, Mons^{r}. Breteuil amongst the rest, who, I believe, in consequence of orders he two or three days ago received by a courier, is to stay here till the spring. Count Mercy did not stay dinner. He does not seem to be by any means in the same degree of spirits he was a few days ago, and I should almost imagine that he has lately failed here in some plan. He sent a courier to Vienna two days ago.

After dinner I found an opportunity of taking the Chancellor aside, and of mentioning to him how greatly I was surprised and

world were to be immediately evacuated. Three months is in most instances the term agreed upon. See *Annual Register* for 1762, p. 241.

[1] Münnich, and others of the older frequenters of Catherine's Court, must have been able to remember the time when Peter the Great had enforced by law the holding of social meetings in private houses, where men and women were obliged to meet. This was one of the methods by which Peter aimed at overcoming the Oriental habits of the Russian nobility.

mortified, in my first conversation with the Vice-Chancellor, at his referring to the project of a new treaty of commerce delivered to Mr. Keith before the death of the late Empress; that it was absolutely inadmissible, and (without entering into particulars) that it appeared to me to be merely calculated to take from the English every privilege and every advantage which the equity and policy of Russia had formerly allowed them, and at the same time, to overturn the most essential laws of our own commerce and navigation; that it was in effect driving a nation out of Russia who had every pretension to better usage, at a time too when they had the least reason to expect such a mortification. He heard me with great complacency and attention, and seemed struck with what I said. When I ceased speaking, he assured me that it was the wish of the Empress and those about her to cultivate the friendship of England in every instance, and added that he wished I would give him a state in writing of my objections to that project, as things of that nature were to pass through many hands. . . . I shall immediately make proper extracts from the Report of the Board of Trade, and put them into the best form I am able. . . . I have every day many questions asked me from all quarters in relation to the Havannah, and am very happy to find they see it as the capital acquisition of the war. They are also extremely inquisitive with regard to the progress of the negotiations for the peace. If I had received any information, I should not, without particular directions, be fond of communicating it; but as none has yet reached me, I have little to say upon the subject. In the meantime, I shall express upon all proper occasions what I think myself founded in asserting, that England wishes for such a peace as her success entitles her to, but is able still to pursue her conquests and maintain her acquisitions, that she is desirous to meet and to cultivate the friendship of other nations, but not in a situation to sue for it or to solicit it.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

My Lord,— Moscow: November 22, 1762.

I received on Saturday last the honour of your Lordship's letter of October 15, and at the same time one from Mr. Grenville of the 14th, and I cannot omit this first opportunity of congratulating you upon your having received this fresh mark of his

Majesty's favour and confidence.[1] The same post brought me the Gazette with the account of his Majesty's forces having so gloriously recovered the important settlement of Newfoundland. This, added to our other advantages, must give the greatest satisfaction to every British subject, but particularly to those who from their situation have an opportunity of seeing the impression which they make on foreign countries and the most respectable light in which other nations behold the resolution, the strength, and the resources of England.

I saw the Vice-Chancellor this morning. He mentioned to me the Empress's being fully convinced of the expediency of settling a new treaty of commerce between the two Crowns, and asked me if, as we did not approve of the Russian project, I had not a counter-project to offer. I told him I had such a one, and that I would deliver it in a few days. I must not by any means appear to be dilatory in negotiating the treaty, and yet could wish to have his Majesty's instructions, in consequence of my despatch from Petersburg of October 1, before I enter into the full discussion of it. I am not sure that the Vice-Chancellor is informed thoroughly of the determinations of his Court in relation to the treaty, but his conversation would induce me to hope that we may be able to obtain some relief for the merchants at Riga, but at the same time I am afraid that they will insist upon their exception in the ninth Article of the project, that in time of war, corn, masts, ship timber, sails, pitch, and tar shall not be deemed contraband.

Pro memoria, Riga.

1. English merchants paid 33⅓ per cent. more excise than did the Dutch merchants upon all imports except salt and herrings; and upon certain exports, such as masts and other woods, grain, wax, iron, they paid four roubles where the Dutch paid three.

2. Since 1756 all foreign merchants had been forbidden to possess either house or shop, or even to take food in their own houses, but were expressly ordered to lodge *en pension* with the citizens. Nothing of this kind was to be found in the ukase of 1690.

3. They were forbidden to resell what they had bought, even

[1] His appointment as Secretary of State.

to the citizens, a privilege which had not been forbidden them either by Peter the Great's decree of 1690 or by the patents of 1731 and 1733. Foreign merchants enjoyed the rights till 1756.

4. The decree of 1690 had forbidden traffic between foreigners. This had been construed to mean that they might not lend money upon deposits, or even exchange the different kinds of money.

5. By another forced construction of the decree of 1690, the merchants were subjected to the same inconvenient regulations as colporteurs and itinerant merchants.

6. The magistrates claimed the right, under an old law of 1673, to forbid the residence of foreign merchants in the town for more than two months in the summer.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

My Lord,— Moscow: November 22, 1762.

The Vice-Chancellor mentioned to me further this morning that, as I had expressed in my first conversation a desire of knowing the dispositions of this Court in relation to the renewal of the Treaty of Alliance, he had her Imperial Majesty's directions to make me the following answer, which it is desired may be kept secret. I write in French, that I may as accurately as possible render it in his own words: 'Que l'Impératrice reconnaissant dans toute leur étendue la convenance et la nécessité de renouveler le traité d'alliance avec la Grande-Bretagne, tant pour l'avantage mutuel des deux cours que pour la sûreté et le repos de l'Europe à l'avenir, désire de son côté ce renouvellement, mais que par une suite de sa droiture naturelle, ainsi que de son amitié et de sa confiance pour sa Majesté Britannique, elle ne peut lui cacher qu'elle en diffère pour un temps l'exécution, parce que sa Majesté dans les circonstances présentes a décliné de renouveler les anciens engagements avec la cour de Vienne, se contentant d'entretenir une bonne intelligence et une bonne amitié avec elle, comme le demande les intérêts naturels et immuables des deux nations, jusqu'à ce que l'on voye quel sera le système de l'Europe après la paix générale.[1]

[1] This declaration of Catherine's neutrality assured peace to Europe. *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 217.

From this and other hints which have occasionally been dropped, I cannot but be of opinion that it is the wish of this Court that whenever the Treaty of Alliance is renewed the Empress Queen should be a party to it.

The Same to the Same.

My Lord,— Moscow: November 25, 1762.

In my despatch of November 1 I took notice of my having declined notifying my arrival to Count Mercy. He mentioned his surprise at it to my brother (with whom he was acquainted at Vienna), alledging that the two English ministers who had come to Turin had both notified their arrival to him, and that he heard by his letters from Paris that the Duke of Bedford had paid the same compliment to the Imperial minister at that Court. In consequence of this information, I thought it right to follow that example. He immediately paid me a visit, which I have since returned.

The present Government seems to go on smoothly; if there has been any uneasiness or disturbance lately it has not transpired, but whatever may be the situation in other respects they certainly are not at this time in want of money. I am induced to form this opinion from their having within this fortnight paid off several debts contracted by this Empress when she was Great Duchess, as well as some of the late Empress.

The Emperor Peter III., upon his coming to the crown, found very considerable hoards, which his predecessor had accumulated in the latter part of her reign, when with her pleasures her expenses ceased, which he did not live long enough to squander, for since his death large sums have been found concealed in his different palaces.

As the report of the Empress having consented to send a body of troops to assist the Empress Queen gained ground, I thought it right to take an opportunity of asking the Chancellor if there was any foundation for it. They assured me it had never been thought of. The more I see of the gentlemen, the less they appear to me capable of directing the affairs of a great nation. The Chancellor has the air and address of a man of condition, but if ever he had any abilities they are greatly impaired, and his mind and body are too much relaxed for him to be capable of that intense application to business which his situation requires. I am

persuaded he has no real affection for England and if his conduct should ever be favourable to us, it will not have been determined by his inclination, but the act of his judgment or his sovereign's orders. The Vice-Chancellor has been so long in England, that it is unnecessary to say anything of his character, abilities, or connections. Bestucheff is old, and has the appearance of being still older. If he is now capable of business, it cannot last long; it is said that he is greatly consulted, and his behaviour to me at least implies that he would have it thought so. Panin, who seems better qualified than most of the Russians to hold the first place, probably shares the Empress's confidence with him. But the Empress herself, from all the observations I can make and all the lights I can obtain, is in talents, information, and application greatly superior to everything in this country. Hampered by the obligations she has lately received, conscious of the difficulty of her situation, and fearful of the dangers with which she must hitherto have thought herself surrounded, she cannot as yet venture to act of herself, and get rid of many of those about her whose characters and whose abilities she must despise.[1] For the present she takes every method to gain the confidence and affections of her subjects. If she succeeds she will exert the authority she acquires to the honour and advantage of her empire. I have frequently met with Teplow,[2] one of the Empress's secretaries. He is a creature of Count Mercy's, but seems a most ignorant, pretending fellow. Rosamouski (who, from the part he took in the Revolution, is at present greatly noticed by her Imperial Majesty) is governed by him. He could hardly give a worse proof of his understanding. The declaration[3] which I had the honour to send your Lordship in my last despatch, is certainly the consequence of the united efforts of Rosamouski, the Vice-Chancellor, and Mercy; the two first probably persuaded her Imperial Majesty into it by telling her that in her present situation she ought not to enter into particular engagements with any Power, but try to keep well with all. It

[1] 'If the Empress did not fear as well as love, if she did not think the Orlows' dependence upon her favour necessary to her safety, and did not at the same time fear their resolution if they were disobliged, as she finds herself entirely surrounded by their creatures, she might perhaps shake off a yoke of which at times she feels the whole weight.' *Russian Memoranda, Buckinghamshire Papers.*

[2] See Note, p. 59.

[3] See p. 91.

appears to me a little extraordinary that, as the manner in which I had mentioned the Treaty of Alliance required no immediate answer, they should not rather have evaded entering at present into the subject than given that declaration in which their partiality to the House of Austria is so apparent; for can their having refused in the actual situation of this country to renew a treaty [1] (the *casus fœderis* and the certainty of an immediate requisition of the stipulated assistance absolutely existing) be a reason for their declining an alliance which at this time is certainly more necessary to the Empress of Russia than to England? It was undoubtedly advisable for his Majesty to appear disposed to renew that treaty, but when the declining health of the Great Duke, who continues much in the same way, and the still precarious state of things here are fully considered, there is no great reason to regret this Court's having refused it.

If the news of the success of Prince Henry [2] in Saxony has affected the Court of Vienna in the same degree that their friends have felt it here; it may tend greatly to facilitate the peace of Germany.

From 'Russian Memoranda.' [3]

The Grand Chancellor,[4] with an easy address, and in general that engaging deportment which befits a person of distinction, is a weak, timorous, half-honest man, and a prejudiced, inefficient,

[1] The treaty of 1726 between Austria and Russia was renewed in 1746, 1756, and 1757, and, by the accession of Russia to the Treaty of Versailles, between France and Austria in 1756 and 1760. A direct alliance of friendship and defence was also concluded in 1760. See Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, ii., iii.

[2] Prince Henry of Prussia, brother to Frederic the Great, had won a brilliant victory at Freiberg on October 29. *Frederick the Great*, vi. 317 *et seq.*

[3] *Buckinghamshire Papers.* The 'Memoranda' occur as disconnected notes, and are undated, though they bear evidence of having been written during the ambassador's return voyage. They therefore will occasionally be found to anticipate events.

[4] Count Michael Ilarionovitch Woronzow, Grand Chancellor (1714–1767), had risen to eminence by the favour of the Czarina Elizabeth, having been her Chamberlain, and one of the first in the plot which brought her to the throne. When Bestucheff became Grand Chancellor in 1744, Woronzow was made Vice-Chancellor, and enjoyed, it is said, more of the confidence of Elizabeth than did Bestucheff, whose foreign policy was not in accordance with the real sympathies of

dilatory minister. His situation of body and mind is equally unhappy, to which, perhaps, the disorder of his domestic affairs not a little contributes, arising by no means from what he spends, but from what his indolence and inattention suffer him to be robbed of. His wife has outwardly the cordial openness of a housekeeper or the mistress of a fashionable inn, but is, in effect, very designing, and her low cunning in former days has been successful.[1]

She and the Countess, her daughter,[2] are both extravagant; the first loves gaming, and the other, men!

The Russian ladies follow the example of the English in styling the Vice-Chancellor[3] a pretty gentleman; but he has not been so politic in his gallantry at home as in London, where, by blending business with his pleasure, he at once obtained information and consequence. He now has neither information nor consequence. When envoy in England he was greatly distinguished by the wife of the Hanoverian minister, who enabled him to furnish his Court with the most authentic intelligence. This made him esteemed at home a minister of superior talents, and was the principal reason of his being appointed Vice-Chancellor, though at

Elizabeth. Woronzow was, like Elizabeth, a friend to France, and he strongly opposed the alliance with England in 1755. During the ascendency of Bestucheff Woronzow lost credit with the Empress, and in 1758 he plotted with the French ambassador to overthrow him. He then became Grand Chancellor in his stead, which office he retained under Peter III. He held himself aloof from the intrigues which gave so much notoriety to his niece Elizabeth, and consequently preserved the favour of Catherine II., who, however, though she left him his office, gave him but little of her confidence. See *Archives Woronzow*; *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii.; *Biographie Universelle*. 'Le chancelier de Woronzow,' writes the Comte de Choiseul to M. Breteuil, 'est si faible qu'il ne faut pas espérer qu'il ait jamais le courage de combattre les caprices de son maître.'

[1] See Keith to Grenville, July 12, 1762, p. 62.

[2] Countess Strogonow.

[3] Alexandre Mikhailovitch Galitzin (1723–1807). He held the office of Vice-Chancellor without much authority or consideration until 1775, becoming at last a mere instrument in the hands of Catherine and Panin. The French Government, while fully aware of his incapacity, considered him as favourable to their interests at St. Petersburg, and an advocate for a French alliance, provided it was combined with that of Austria. 'Il a,' writes the Duc de Choiseul, 'pour le roi de Prusse une véritable haine.' *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 191 and 212, etc. See also pp. 52 and 62, note 3 and 1.

that time nobody in Russia suspected the nature of those abilities which had entitled him to merit such a mark of approbation.

The name of Bestucheff[1] is too well known in the political world for me to dwell much upon his character. He was originally a man of lively parts, and long experience has given him a general knowledge of the affairs of Europe. Though debauched, profligate, deceitful, and interested to excess, the vanity of transmitting his name to posterity is his ruling passion. This induces him to risk a fresh disgrace in his last moments and to waste the dregs of life in feebly struggling for a situation which his mind and body are too much enervated to fill. Ever a creature of the House of Austria, his professed system has been to check the power of France, and as it was that Court which occasioned his fall, his original indisposition to their views is become a rooted enmity.[2] Yet, blind to the late political Revolution and to those variations in the connections of the European Powers which entirely change their views and make the history of the last hundred years as little instructive to the negotiations of 1765 as Livy or Tacitus, he perseveres in the same notion with that obstinacy and that aversion to conviction which has too often characterised the latter days of abler heads than his. He has been esteemed and always professes himself a friend of England, but when he found our views were no longer subservient to the House of Austria, the moment that union of interests ceased, all former professions were forgot, and every obligation that our liberality showered upon him was cancelled.

M. Panin[3] is turned of fifty. He was brought early into business, and habit has given him some degree of application.

[1] See p. 8.

[2] Compare Frederic the Great's opinion in *Polit. Correspondenz Friedrich's des Zweiten*, vol. xxii. p. 88.

[3] Nikita Ivanovitch Panin (1718–1783) was the son of one of Peter the Great's companions, of Italian origin. He served for some time as ambassador both at Copenhagen and Stockholm, and in Sweden seems to have imbibed aristocratic and even republican ideas of government which, on his accession to power, put him at times in opposition to the policy of Catherine. In 1760 he was appointed Governor to the Grand Duke Paul. He was concerned in the conspiracy which brought Catherine to the throne, and almost immediately assumed the direction of foreign affairs, with the simple title of *Premier Membre du Collège des Affaires Etrangères*, whilst the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor had but little of the power which should have attached to those offices. It is supposed that his influence

From his having passed many years in Sweden he is most conversant in the affairs of the North. The System he has adopted, and from which nothing but its being made impracticable by the indisposition of the other Powers will ever induce him to depart, is to check the formidable alliance of the Houses of Austria and Bourbon by uniting strictly England, Russia, Holland, and Prussia, and to strengthen that league still further by keeping Sweden in a state of inactivity and prevailing upon Denmark to quit her French connections. The first, he imagines, is to be accomplished by constantly keeping up the animosity of the rival factions; the latter by persuading the Great Duke, when he is of age, to give up the Duchy of Holstein.[1] In a conversation I once had with M. Panin, he seemed to think that a vote in the Diet of the Empire is of less consequence to Russia than perhaps is generally believed. The King of Prussia is his hero, yet he is not so far blinded by his partiality as to be insensible of the many imperfections which sully the character of that prince, nor is he too confident in the duration of those engagements which will not

upon Catherine arose in part from the fear that she had lest he should espouse the cause of his pupil as opposed to her own. He seems very early to have been in the pay of the King of Prussia, and was consequently strongly Prussian in his political sympathies. The French Court also believed him to be in their favour. 'Le comte de Panin est honnête et désintéressé,' ran the instructions to the French ambassador in 1764. 'Il veut le bien de son pays et d'ailleurs est assez bien porté pour la France.'

Panin acknowledged to Harris in 1778 that he was the author of the 'Northern System,' from which the English were practically excluded by the influence of Prussia. This Northern League of Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark showed in 1781 its jealousy of English maritime superiority by the declaration of an 'Armed Neutrality' (see p. 46).

Mme. D'Ashkow thus describes M. Panin at the era of the Revolution: 'Il faut s'imaginer un pâle valétudinaire, ayant dépassé grandement l'âge moyen, n'aimant que ses aises, ayant toujours vécu dans les cours, très soigneux de sa mise, portant une perruque volumineuse avec trois nattes bien poudrées qui tombaient sur ses épaules: en un mot, une fine fleur de courtisan du temps de Louis XIV.' See *Diaries of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. 171; *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 219, 236, etc.; *Biographie Universelle, etc.*; *Mémoires de la Princesse Dashkoff*, ed. by Mrs. Bradford.

[1] This was the cause of the long-standing feud between the Dukes of Holstein-Gottorp and the Royal Family of Denmark, who were of the older branch of the House of Holstein.

probably outlive the day they are no longer essential to his interests.

He is esteemed a man of honour and integrity in a country where, for the first, the language has no name. Conscious and vain of the general good opinion, he will be cautious not to swerve from that conduct which has merited it. It were greatly to be wished, for the good of Russia and the peace and happiness of the sovereign, that MM. Panin and Orlow would live in friendship, if such a friendship were not incompatible with the idea of a marriage in which it is imagined the young gentleman still indulges,[1] an idea the other can never connive at without forfeiting his reputation and risking his popularity, and deviating from his duty to that important charge which an alarmed nation thinks only safe in his keeping. His disposition is naturally indolent and sensual. The Princess D'Ashkow is the favourite of his heart; many doubt whether as his child or his mistress. He speaks of her with affection, is with her almost every moment of his leisure, and communicates the most important secrets to her with that unbounded confidence which a minister should scarcely place in any individual! The Empress, informed of this, and justly alarmed that such intelligence should be given to a person whose restless, intriguing spirit and insatiable ambition has rendered her from her bosom friend her most inveterate enemy, extorted a promise from him that he should never talk to her of affairs of State. He gave his word, but in this instance broke it. Upon this account, as well as from certain intelligence that the Princess used every art[2] to alienate the hearts as well of M. Panin as of many others from her person and government, she has determined to send her from Petersburg.

[1] With the Empress herself. The Chancellor Woronzow, Panin, and Razoumouski strongly opposed this marriage, rumours of which caused also an *émeute* in Moscow, when Ivan's name was proclaimed. See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 217.

[2] The Princess herself ascribes these accusations to the calumnies of the Orlows. (See *Mémoires de la Princesse Dashkoff*, vol. i.) It is certain that Catherine very early resented the rumours which ascribed to so young a woman a conspicuous share in her accession, and even requested M. de Breteuil to deny their truth to Voltaire, the newsvendor of Europe. (See St. Priest, *Etudes Diplomatiques*, p. 38.)

Princess D'Ashkow,[1] a lady whose name, as she wishes, will indisputably be mentioned in history, has a remarkable good figure, and presents herself well. When, for a few moments, her impetuous passions sleep, her countenance pleases and her manner is calculated to raise those sentiments she scarcely ever knew. But though that countenance is fair and the features in no instance faulty, the character of it is generally such, as a skilful painter would wish to imitate who meant to draw any of the many illustrious ladies whose refinements upon cruelty fill the tragic magazine. Hardened and daring beyond expression, her first idea would lead her by the most desperate means to set mankind at liberty, her next to make them all her slaves. If the fate of the late Emperor was ever in deliberation, her vote indisputably condemned him; had a hand been wanting to execute that sentence, hers would have courted the office. In one instance she has paid a tribute to humanity—the shedding tears for the loss of her most amiable husband. He was a man most deservedly loved, and regretted by his sovereign and all who knew him. The ladies most particularly distinguished him; he had been extremely intimate with his wife's two elder sisters before he married her. She surprised him into the marriage, which he never intended, by contriving that her uncle,

[1] The Princess D'Ashkow's Memoirs give a far pleasanter impression of her character. She there rejects with horror the calumny as to her connection with Panin, and claims to have been in complete ignorance of the contemplated murder of Peter III., dating from that event the enmity of the Orlows towards her and her own alienation from them. Her evidence also is in favour of Catherine's own ignorance of the crime. She was convinced of this by the sight of a letter written by Alexis Orlow, immediately after the murder, in which he solicited pardon in the most abject manner and in a style which showed that he was a prey to intoxication and to terror. This letter was carefully preserved by Catherine, and on her death her son found it and read it with the exclamation: 'Dieu soit loué! Les quelques doutes que j'avais sur ce sujet relativement à ma mère sont dissipés!' This last fact, however, M^me^ D'Ashkow relates only by hearsay, for she was banished on Paul's accession. She had returned to St. Petersburg in 1782, after her long wanderings, and was then made by Catherine *Director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences*. Her English biographer, who knew her in her old age, speaks of her as of a being of another sphere, 'sincere, loving, and of so gay and contented a temper as could only have resulted from a life of innocence and kindness'—a subject of calumny only because she was herself a pure and disinterested soul in the midst of a corrupt Court. She died in 1810. See *Mémoires de la Princesse Dashkoff*, ed. by Mrs. Bradford.

the Great Chancellor, should find them together; the moment he came in she told him the Prince had just made her proposals of marriage, and the young man, embarrassed with his situation, and afraid of the First Minister, did not dare to contradict her.

The Princess has read a great deal, possesses a singular activity of body and mind, and has a very ready apprehension. If she was mistress enough of her temper to be quiet till the present suspicions of her are subsided, till age has tempered the rage of her passions and ripened her judgment, her story would not end here.

Her Imperial Majesty is neither short nor tall; she has a majestic air, and possesses that happy mixture of dignity and ease which at once enforces respect and sets men at their ease. Formed with a mind and body capable of acquiring every accomplishment, an enforced retirement gave her more leisure to cultivate them than is usually allotted to princes, and qualified her, as she charmed the eye in gay society, to delight the understanding in more serious moments. This period of constraint, which lasted several years, and the agitation of mind and continual fatigues which she has undergone since her accession, have deprived her charms of their freshness. Besides, she has never been beautiful. Her features were far from being so delicately and exactly formed as to compose what might pretend to regular beauty, but a fine complexion, an animated and intelligent eye, a mouth agreeably turned, and a profusion of glossy chestnut hair produce that sort of countenance which, a very few years ago, a man must have been either prejudiced or insensible to have beheld with indifference. She has been, and still is, what often pleases and always attaches more than beauty. She is extremely well made, the neck and hands remarkably beautiful, and the limbs so elegantly turned as equally to become the dress of either sex. Her eyes are blue, their vivacity tempered by a languor in which there is much sensibility and no insipidity. She has the air of paying no attention to what she wears, yet she is always too well drest for a woman who is entirely indifferent to her appearance. A man's dress is what suits her best; she wears it always when she rides on horseback. It is scarce credible what she does in that way, managing horses, even fiery horses, with all the skill and courage of a groom. She excels, too, in the serious as well as livelier dances. She expresses herself with elegance in French, and I am assured that she speaks

Russian with as much precision as German, which is her native language, and that she has a critical knowledge of both languages. She speaks and reasons with fluency and precision, and some letters which must have been of her own composing have been admired and applauded by the scholars of the nation in whose language they were wrote.

Reading made her amusement in the retirement in which she lived in the days of the late Empress. The history and the interests of the European Powers are familiar to her. When she spoke to me of English history, I perceived that what had struck her the most was the reign of Elizabeth. Time will show where such an emulation may lead her. Finding herself superior in information and argument to most of those about her, she thinks she is equally so to everybody, and, understanding clearly what she has learnt, she sometimes thinks herself mistress of what she has not. When she was on board the Admiral's ship at Cronstadt, her imperial standard flying, and flattered with the inexperienced grandeur of commanding more than twenty large ships, she disputed with me which end of a man-of-war went first—a circumstance which indeed she was not obliged to know—but the actual situation made the doubt ridiculous.

Much stress is laid upon her resolution, particularly in the instance of dethroning her husband. Desperate situations make cowards valiant. She was compelled either to ruin him or to submit herself to that confinement which she knew had long been in deliberation. Those who know her well say she is rather enterprising than brave, and that her appearance of courage arises sometimes from a conviction of the pusillanimity of her enemies, at others from her not seeing her danger. She certainly is bolder than the generality of her sex, but I have seen her twice very much afraid without reason: once when she was getting out of boat into a ship; the other time, upon hearing a little noise in the ante-chamber at Court. But when the occasion requires it she dares all, and in many critical and dangerous situations her courage has never failed her. Yet she has all the delicacy of her sex. To see her is to know that she could love, and that her love would make the happiness of a lover worthy of her.

Two capital errors, which are equally evident and inexcusable, are the meanness with which she submits to the ill-bred inattention of Orlow, and the little affection she shows to the Grand Duke.

The amusements of her retirement, into which she enters with a youthful spirit, are trifling beyond expression, and much the same which children in other countries leave off at twelve years old.

Those who are most in her society assure me that her application to business is incredible. The welfare and prosperity of her subjects, the glory of her empire, are always present to her; and to all appearance her care will raise the reputation and power of Russia to a point which, at present, they have never reached, if she does not indulge too much in far-fetched and unpractical theories, which interested or ignorant people are too ready to suggest to her. Her foible is to be too systematic, and that may be the rock on which she may, perhaps, split. She embraces too many objects at once; she likes to begin, regulate, and correct projects all in a moment. Indefatigable in everything that she undertakes, she obliges her ministers to work incessantly. They argue, make plans, and sketch out a thousand schemes, and decide upon nothing. Among those who hold the first rank in her confidence, some will be found who have experience, but few if any who possess superior talents. There is, however, one of her Majesty's secretaries [1] who has knowledge, wit, and even application, when women and the pleasures of the table—which always demand his first cares—give him any leisure for business.

Unwilling to touch so tender a string, I have deferred till the last speaking of the Revolution and the most melancholy catastrophe which succeeded.

The Empress has frequently talked to me of her husband, and, without exaggerating his indiscretions, pointed out those which principally occasioned his ruin. Once, in her absence, I saw his

[1] This is probably Dmitri Vassiliévitch Wolkow (1718–1785), secretary to the Conference under Elizabeth and afterwards private secretary to Peter III. He had been devoted to the interests of Austria, but was considered open to bribery from any quarter. Of him, Lord Buckinghamshire writes: 'Wolkow, born with great abilities, and bred up in business from his youth, is, perhaps, the best informed of what relates to the interior of the country; but the notorious profligacy of his character will ever prevent his rising to that distinguished situation to which in other respects he is fully qualified to pretend. It is scarcely doubted by anybody that he betrayed the late Emperor, to whom he owed the greatest obligations. Neither he nor Wilganow were strangers to the Revolution, three days before it took place. They contributed to prevent any spirited resolutions being taken at Peterhof, and were rewarded.' *Russian Memoranda.* See also *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 180.

picture in her cabinet; it was without a frame and stood upon the floor, as if brought in for her to look at. The Vice-Chancellor told me it was a strong likeness. I examined it with attention, and could not help running over in my mind the hard fate of the heir of Russia, Sweden, and Holstein, who, with many defects in his understanding, had none in his heart.

The Vice-Chancellor seemed surprised at my silent attention, and asked me what employed my thoughts. Was it so difficult to guess?

When this is considered as a portrait drawn by one who knew her and who wished with candour to steer the middle course between calumny and adulation, who will not mourn the steps she took to raise herself to Empire, and the fatal measures which the worst of her followers judged necessary to secure her in that throne she fills so well?

Many, and some of the deepest hue, are the blemishes which shade a character otherwise so amiable. Her enemies, and particularly the French and Austrians, have taken every method to place them in the strongest light, and, not contented with those which were known to be true, and others but too probable, they have sought to blacken her still more with fictions which have almost been generally received, even by those from whom her political disposition might claim a fairer hearing. She is accused of dethroning her husband; of usurping that empire of which, even from her own declaration, she could only pretend to be Regent; of causing her husband to be put to death; of changing the whole system of her Empire in order to make one of her former lovers king of Poland; and, lastly, of contriving the murder of the late Prince Ivan.[1] That her present favourite is the fourth person she has distinguished is as certain as that she was persuaded to receive the first by the Empress Elizabeth, who thought her nephew incapable of begetting children; and possibly anyone who is acquainted with the abandoned scenes which passed at that Court will wonder that a young, lively woman, who had long seen debauchery sanctified by usage and the highest example, should want any persuasion at all. When I allow that the seizing the Crown herself does not admit of justification, nor even of palliation, that adopting the most favourable and improbable supposition that

[1] This sketch was, no doubt, written towards the end of Lord Buckinghamshire's mission.

her husband was put to death, not only without her order, but contrary to her intention, her not clearing up the fact and punishing the guilty at any risk is unpardonable. Shall I incur a suspicion of partiality when I assert that the folly and imprudence of the ill-fated Emperor, his avowed intention of confining her, his further plan of setting aside the Great Duke, his ill-conceived expedition against the Danes, his mean, subservient adulation of the King of Prussia, which in the end must have been destructive to his country, and lastly, the insults she was hourly exposed to from his abandoned mistress—too powerful an incentive of that feminine resentment which so often decides the fate of empires—may, in a great measure, apologise for her conduct so far as removing him from the throne?

A discerning reader who peruses these ill-digested lines will see I wished to justify, as far as truth and conviction would admit, and that rather than deviate from either I cut short a subject which I almost wish not to have begun.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

My Lord,— Moscow: December 2, 1762.

I have found that the French have found some expedient to settle the ceremonial, and that the Baron de Breteuil is very soon to have an audience of her Imperial Majesty. I have sent the papers relative to the treaty of commerce to the Chancellor, but do not expect to hear immediately how far the propositions they contain may be agreeable to this Government.

A message was brought me this morning from Count Bestucheff to let me know that the French were actually soliciting the Empress to enter into a treaty of commerce with them, and that in order to induce her to consent to it they offered to engage to take all their tobacco and beef from hence, instead of supplying themselves from England and Ireland. That he had hitherto and would still continue to oppose it. That if England was desirous of renewing the treaty of alliance upon the old terms he believed he could carry it through. That he would call upon me very soon, but could not as yet, lest we might be suspected of being too intimately connected. If the French have thrown out these propositions, it must have been with a view only of amusing this country for the present without any intention of carrying them

into execution, as although there is a considerable quantity of tobacco produced in the Ukraine,[1] it is greatly inferior to ours, and before it reached France would unavoidably become at least a fifth dearer. The experiment with regard to the beef has already been tried by a merchant here, who sent a large quantity to that country, which was spoilt before it arrived, notwithstanding particular care had been taken in the curing of it. Perhaps they imagine that a negociation of this sort may delay the renewal of our treaty of commerce, and occasion a coolness between the two nations.

There is at present a Swede here, whose name is Colonel Duriets, who was sent with a compliment upon the Empress's accession. He is very well received by her Imperial Majesty, and she has given him leave to come to Court every day, alleging that as he had no public character he need not be governed by the same rules as the foreign ministers, who are only permitted to attend her upon Sundays and holidays. This has occasioned many speculations, and as the Queen of Sweden[2] is known to be a woman of an active, intriguing disposition, it has been supposed that he is negociating some private treaty. Upon the state of the facts, one very natural conclusion arises, that if the Empress had anything of consequence in agitation she would never have showed such a distinction to the person who transacted it as must unavoidably draw the eyes of everybody upon him. I should think this too trifling a circumstance to take notice of if there was not a possibility of its deriving some degree of importance from coinciding with other informations which his Majesty's ministers

[1] The cultivation of tobacco was just now a favourite project with the Russian Government. In 1762 a monopoly of it, which had been granted to Count Shouvalow in 1759, was abolished, and shortly afterwards the Government distributed seeds, granted premiums, and published the best methods of cultivation, with the result that its production was greatly increased, and from this time carried on at a profit. In 1783, however, the imports still more than doubled the exports. Tooke's *Russian Empire*, iii. 140.

[2] Louise Ulrique, sister to Frederic the Great. Her husband was Adolphus Frederic, Bishop of Lübeck, of the House of Holstein-Gottorp. He was elected King of Sweden (1751–1771) by the influence of Russia, who granted to the Swedes more favourable conditions at the Treaty of Abo (1743) on condition of his election. Catherine II. was his niece. The King and Queen were thus in a manner doubly pledged to the Russian alliance. See Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, xiii. 347 *et seq.*; see also pp. 14, 15.

may receive. Her Imperial Majesty wished me joy this morning of the preliminaries of the peace being signed. I could make no answer but that I had not received the least intimation of it.

The Same to the Same.

[*Most secret.*]

My Lord,— Moscow: December 6, 1762.

I received on Thursday the inclosed declaration [1] which has been sent to all the foreign ministers. M. Breteuil, to veil the appearance of his Court's having given up their ill-judged claim,[2] declares that this is all he ever required. How far that is the case your Lordship will judge by what is mentioned in Mr. Keith's despatches, to which I will beg leave to refer you. M. Breteuil, and Mr. Almodover, the Spanish minister, have had their audiences and were at Court yesterday, the Empress's name day, which was celebrated in every instance with the greatest order, propriety, and magnificence. Count Mercy and myself had the honour of supping with her Imperial Majesty. The other foreign ministers were at another table. The company was excessively numerous, and there was every appearance of universal satisfaction. Nobody here has received any account of the preliminaries, which we all wait for with the greatest impatience.

In consequence of the message I had received from Count Bestucheff, I sent him a note, a copy of which, to avoid confusion, is added by way of postscript in the French cypher.[3] I desired the person who delivered it to mention how much I wished that he would permit me to have an hour's conversation with him when he could find an opportunity. It will be difficult for me till then to form any judgment of his intention or his ability to assist me. I shall also try to find out how far the very positive assurances given me that this Court was not in want of money were well-founded. Bestucheff declares that his regard for England is absolutely disinterested, and yet I must suppose that if he gives any essential assistance he will not decline some marks of acknowledgment. I cannot help regretting that it has been my misfortune hitherto

[1] See p. 110.

[2] That is, the claim of a fresh *réversale* from Catherine acknowledging that the Imperial title involved no change of ceremonial. See p. 108.

[3] See p. 107.

to have no communication with any of her Imperial Majesty's ministers but those whose behaviour did not encourage me to enter into any confidential conversation which did not immediately refer to the business before us, and that the very great facility which everybody in England supposed his Majesty's ambassador would find in his negociations in this country may produce an opinion that the public service has suffered through my fault. I must, however, add that the Empress's behaviour to me upon every occasion induces me to hope that ultimately everything will be settled to his Majesty's satisfaction. Count Mercy, in his conversation to my brother and myself, mourns the situation of his Court, and insinuates how expedient he thinks it for England not to suffer the House of Austria to be oppressed. In my answer I always hint that his Court has drawn their present situation upon themselves. Count Kaunitz, son of the Imperial First Minister, is just come with a compliment to the Empress from Vienna; immediately after his audience Count Mercy brought him to visit me.

P.S.—A French courier who was bringing despatches to M. Breteuil has been robbed and almost murdered on the other side of Petersburg. By some letters that have been recovered, M. Breteuil supposes he was bringing him a copy of the preliminaries.

Note à M. de Bestucheff du 2 *de Décembre N.S.* 1762.

L'ambassadeur d'Angleterre est extrêmement flatté des témoignages que son Excellence le comte de Bestucheff vient de lui donner de la continuation de son amitié pour la nation anglaise.

A l'égard du renouvellement du traité d'alliance, comme S.M.I. a faite une déclaration dernièrement par laquelle elle en remet la discussion jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix générale de l'Europe, il lui semble qu'à le moment il ne serait pas à propos de tâcher de l'entamer.[1] Mais pour ce qui regarde celui de commerce l'Angleterre aurait une obligation très essentielle à son Excellence s'il pouvait en presser la conclusion sur le pied des propositions que l'ambassadeur a communiqué au grand chancelier quelques jours passés. Ce serait douter des connaissances de son Excellence tant en fait de politique que de commerce si on

[1] This answer of the ambassador was by no means approved by his Government. See Lord Halifax's despatch of January 19, 1763.

s'efforçait de combattre ce projet de la France dont il est question.[1] L'ambassadeur aussi se fait fort que les lumières de S.M.I. ne se laisseront pas frapper du faux brillant de ces propositions, dont le plus léger examen d'une génie comme le sien suffira de développer la futilité.

Du reste à tout événement il se repose sur l'amitié et les bons offices de M. Bestucheff.

[The question of the ceremonial, which was now causing some little tension in the relations between France and Russia, and in the sequel was to put an end for several years to all direct communication between Catherine and the King of France, related to the imperial title, the recognition of which had long been made a matter of vital importance by the Sovereigns of Russia. The title of Emperor had been assumed by Peter the Great at the petition of his Senate, after the Treaty of Nystad in 1721 had assured him of his Swedish conquests and of the command of the Baltic. It was claimed that the title had been borne by the Russian monarchs since the fifteenth century, and it is certain that the word 'Czar' has always signified in the Slavonic a 'monarch raised above kings.'[2]

Prussia, the States-General, and Sweden were the first to recognise the title. Great Britain agreed to it as a condition of her treaty with Russia in 1742;[3] France in 1745, Spain in 1759, and Poland not till 1764. For the last, the ratification was something more than an affair of ceremonial. With France the matter had already given rise to much friction. The recognition of Elizabeth's claim to the title in 1744 was worded in such a way that it tended to make it a matter merely of personal compliment

[1] See despatch of December 2, 1762.

[2] Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, xiii. 313. He adds that Russian historians quote a letter of the Emperor Maximilian, addressed to the Grand Duke Vasili Ivanovitch, in which the term is used.

[3] Great Britain, however, stipulated that the 'recognition should involve no claim to pre-eminence on the part of Russia,' or of change in the ceremonial. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

which might or might not be renewed to her successors,[1] and on these terms both Elizabeth and Peter III. had granted reverses, declaring that the claim did not involve any alteration in the ceremonial between the two Courts. The French Government was now requesting a renewal of the reverse from Catherine, and the audiences given to the French ambassador were suspended while the affair was in negotiation. Catherine at last replied to the demand by a declaration [2] which, though addressed ostensibly to all the Governments, was in reality addressed especially to France. This for the moment removed the difficulty, because, fresh reverses having been declared unnecessary, the old reverses, with the conditions under which they had been granted, were assumed by the French Government to be valid.[3]

The dispute, however, was renewed in 1767, Catherine refusing to grant fresh reverses, and the French Government refusing to employ the expression 'Imperial Majesty' in the body of the letters addressed to the Empress as well as upon the superscription, a point which was insisted upon by the Russian Government. M. de Choiseul claimed to have conceded the recognition without restriction, but to be the only judge of the manner in which the genius of the French language permitted it to be used,[4] and upon this trivial point both parties took their stand, with the result that after the death of the Marquis de Bausset in 1767 France was represented at St. Petersburg till 1772 only by a *chargé d'affaires*, a state of things which had some effect upon the important negotiations which preceded the partition of Poland.[5]]

[1] St. Priest, *Etudes Diplomatiques*, p. 375.

[2] See p. 110.

[3] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 233.

[4] St. Priest, *Etudes Diplomatiques*, p. 369 *et seq.* Lettre du Duc de Choiseul au Comte Panin, June 18, 1767. Réponse du Comte Panin, August 27, 1767.

[5] *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 286 *et seq.* *Flassan*, vi. 530 *et seq.*

Déclaration faite par l'Ordre exprès de Sa Majesté Impériale le 2 de Décembre 1762.

Le titre impérial que Pierre le Grand, de glorieux mémoire, a pris, ou plutôt renouvelé, pour lui et ses successeurs appartient tant aux souverains qu'à la couronne et à la monarchie de toutes les Russies. Depuis bien du temps S.M. Impériale juge contraire à la stabilité de ce principe tout renouvellement du réversal qu'on avait donné sucessivement à chaque Puissance lorsqu'elle reconnut ce titre. Conformément à ce sentiment S.M. vient d'ordonner à son ministère de faire une déclaration générale que le titre impériale par sa nature même étant une fois attaché à la couronne et à la monarchie de Russie et perpétué depuis longues années et successions, ni elle ni ses successeurs à perpétuité ne pourront plus renouveler les dits réversaux et encore moins entretenir quelques correspondances avec des Puissances qui refuseront de reconnaître le titre impérial dans les personnes des souverains de toutes les Russies ainsi que dans leur couronne et leur monarchie, et pour que cette déclaration termine une fois pour toutes les difficultés dans une matière qui ne doit en avoir aucune, S.M. en parlant de la Déclaration de l'empereur Pierre le Grand déclare que le titre impérial n'apportera aucun changement au cérémonial usité entre les cours, lequel restera sur le même pied.[1]

Signé { WORONZOW. / GALITZIN.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: December 9, 1762.

Colonel Duriets (whom I mentioned in my despatch of the 2nd instant) had taken leave of this Court in order to return to Sweden, but is now to remain here the winter by the particular desire of the Empress. It is not easy to account for the reason

[1] St. Priest observes that the firm tone of this declaration belies the opinion, that has been sometimes expressed, that Catherine on first coming to the throne was 'uncertain in all her views.' On the contrary, she faced the perils of her situation with indomitable pride, and refused to submit to conditions which the Czarina Elizabeth had accepted. *Etudes Diplomatiques*, p. 37.

of this,[1] nor can I think it of any very great consequence; but amongst other reports which it occasions it is rumoured that the plan for altering the present form of government in Sweden is renewed.

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

[Cypher.] December 10, 1762.

I am to acquaint your Lordship that the King approved your declining to make mention of a first advance towards Count Mercy, as well as of the reason which you mention, as in consideration of the excessive shyness and reserve which appeared in the answer returned from Vienna some months since to the insinuation made by his Majesty's order from the Hague,[2] an account of which your Lordship found in the reply to the late Prussian memorial; but though his Majesty thinks you judged that matter right, yet it is not his intention that your Lordship should keep yourself at an affected distance from the Austrian minister, but would rather have you live upon an easy and amiable footing with him, and if you should be sounded either by him or by the Russian ministers concerning the King's disposition towards a renewal of the ancient system of union between the two Courts, your Lordship will let it be understood that, though his Majesty has formed no fixt plan, nor thought of making any direct proposal tending to a reconciliation, yet you are persuaded, from what you know of the sentiments of your Court, that he is far from having conceived any implacable animosity towards the Queen of Hungary, being on the contrary very well disposed to a renewal of the former friendship, and ready to give any proofs of such a disposition that may be consistent with his engagements with other Powers.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

[*Most secret.*]

My Lord,— Moscow: December 13, 1762.

The Chancellor received, this last post, a letter from M. Woronzow, the Russian minister in London, in which he sent an

[1] Catherine was, as afterwards transpired, in close communication with the Queen of Sweden. See despatch of January 27, 1763.

[2] Of January 12, 1762. See pp. 47 and 51.

account of the preliminaries. I obtained a copy of it, but understand that, as it was only extracted from some of the newspapers, it was not to be depended upon. There was a ball at Court on Saturday, and last night an opera, which was extremely magnificent in every respect. It was given at the Empress's expense, and I should imagine there were not less than two thousand persons present. It is to be continued, and, as soon as the mourning for the late Empress is over, it is H. I. Majesty's intention to make her Court as gay and as splendid as possible.

Count Bestucheff has been ill, which has prevented my hearing from him this last week. The friends of the House of Austria do not scruple to say upon these late successes of the King of Prussia that they now must make peace. Whenever the affairs of Germany are to be settled, I am satisfied that this Court will try to obtain some indemnification for the King of Poland, but his Prussian Majesty, in his present flourishing situation, will not easily be persuaded to give one. If, therefore, there is to be any, it must come from some other quarter. As I had no particular instructions how to direct my behaviour in relation to the interests of the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, I have thought it necessary to keep up some little reserve when the conversation of this ministry has turned upon their subject, which perhaps has prevented me from knowing more fully the dispositions of this Court.

From some things which have fallen from her Imp. Majesty, I am rather of opinion she expected that before this time I should have been enabled to communicate the preliminaries authentically to her.

The Same to the Same.

My Lord,— Moscow: December 20, 1762.

I received yesterday your Lordship's despatch of November 12, and immediately communicated the two articles contained in it[1] to the Chancellor. In the evening her Majesty took an opportunity of assuring me that she was particularly sensible of these marks of his Majesty's confidence, and that she would on her part make every possible return. The Vice-Chancellor has delivered a message from her to me to the same purpose, with this addition,

[1] See page 87.

that she rejoiced most sincerely at England's being upon the point of concluding her peace, and hoped it would soon be followed by a general one. I had a very long conversation this morning with the Vice-Chancellor about the treaty of commerce, and he assures me that in a few days I shall have an opportunity of entering into it article by article. I fancy, by what passed, I shall be able to get the merchants of Riga included. I also think that I convinced him of the advantages which would result to this country from our merchants being permitted to carry on a trade to Persia through their territories; but Mr. Elton's misconduct[1] has made an impression which it will be very difficult to get the better of.

I hope soon to have his Majesty's full instructions (in consequence of my letter from Petersburg) for concluding the treaty, as certainly no time should be lost for many obvious

[1] 'Mr. John Elton formed the project to deliver Persian products, *vid* St. Petersburg, to the English from the first hand, and consequently cheaper than by getting them of the mercenary Armenians over Smyrna. He promised himself a great vent for English commodities, with the protection of the Shah; and having persuaded the English factory at St. Petersburg, then the Russia Company in London, and the Russian Court itself, to concur in this project, in the year 1742, he built a ship at Kazan, freighted it with a cargo obtained from St. Petersburg, and sailed to Astrakhan. The profits which arose from the sale of his first cargo gave him hopes of making a large fortune. The new commerce struck root, but Elton himself spoilt all by suffering himself to be caught in the snare laid for him by the envious Armenians, who had hitherto vainly attempted to prevent his success.

'Nadir Shah found Elton a fit instrument for putting in execution one of his darling schemes. He made him an admiral, caused a ship of twenty guns to be built, the command of which he gave to Elton, with orders to hoist the Persian flag and to oblige all the Russian vessels to strike sail to it, as paramount over the whole extent of the Caspian Sea. In vain did the factory send him letters of recall; in vain did they offer him riches and promotion from the British Court; he remained in Persia, where he outlived Nadir Shah; after whose death he soon fell a victim, as his favourite, to the rage and resentment of the oppressed subjects.

'Elton, by undertaking the bold plan of his new sovereign, must necessarily have excited the indignation of the Russian Court. If it had before approved and encouraged the specious enterprise on the score of benefits to arise from it to the Russian Empire, it now prohibited the English from the further prosecution of this trade—not from jealousy or envy, but for very just and solid reasons. The nation now carries on this lucrative commerce itself.' See Tooke's *Russian Empire*, iii. 380.

reasons. I have as yet had no conversation with Count Bestucheff, but received a message assuring me of the same disinterested regard for England, and desiring me to let him know what alterations we wished in the old treaty of commerce, and a state of the balance which Russia receives from her commerce with England. I am surprised that he should want such lights from me, as the Government are in possession of my propositions in relation to the treaty, and the other informations a person in his situation ought to be in possession of. I shall, however, send him the proper papers to-morrow.

I have made, particularly, inquiry into the reasons of Colonel Duriets remaining here, and am assured it is only as he is a favourite of the Queen of Sweden's, and that her Imperial Majesty is desirous he should succeed the present Swedish minister, who has solicited his recall. Colonel Duriets, by his conversation with me, seems a well-wisher to England; he tells me that the French party loses ground in Sweden daily, and that if Sir John Goodricke,[1] notwithstanding the message he received at Copenhagen, had gone directly to Stockholm, he is persuaded that from that moment there would have been an end of the French superiority in the Senate. I shall try without affectation to get further lights from him. This Court is very solicitous for the putting an end to the war in Germany, but seem rather at a loss in what manner to proceed to make their endeavours to that purpose effectual. If there should be another campaign, and the King of Prussia should have any success, the situation of the House of Austria will be desperate indeed, and yet, however probable that event, such is the haughtiness of that Court that they will rather wait for it than take any step, which might carry the least appearance of submission, to prevent it.

From some circumstances I almost imagine that France and Prussia will in a little time renew their former alliance. This Court is, I believe, of that opinion, and, I imagine, a little afraid that France may hereafter try through that connection to give a king to Poland.[2] I hope soon to receive his Majesty's instructions in consequence of my letter to Mr. Grenville of November 1.

[1] Afterwards British envoy to Stockholm, 1765. See Memorial B, p. 157.

[2] This suspicion was not entirely without foundation. It is true that France had, in dread of the growing power of Prussia, sided with her ancient enemy in the Seven Years' War, but her more pressing fears were still directed against

The Same to the Same.

[*Most secret.*]

My Lord,— Moscow: December 23, 1762.

By the conversation I had last Monday with the Chancellor, I was in hopes that before this time we should have made some progress in the treaty of commerce, but nothing has past since. . . .

It is confidently reported that the Chancellor will very soon resign, that Panin will succeed him in his office, and Bestucheff take the whole department of foreign affairs upon him. He was so much displeased at the Empress's talking to the French minister last Sunday evening that it must have been taken notice of. Her Imperial Majesty mentioned to me afterwards the subject of her conversation with the French minister. It is with pleasure that I assure your Lordship that she never misses an opportunity of expressing her partiality for the English and for England. Bestucheff has not as yet fixt any time for our meeting, till when I must suspend my judgment of his ability to serve us. Panin's assistance would, I believe, be of more consequence. He is very polite to me, though rather reserved, but seems more familiar with the French minister. No conclusion, however, in this country, where every action is studied, can be drawn from thence. Adaduroff, at first from sickness, and since from multiplicity of business, has declined being acquainted with me.

Russia. The Duc de Choiseul marked this attitude of the French Government with unmistakable emphasis in the early months of 1763, when Catherine II. sent an Ambassador Extraordinary to the Court of Versailles to propose an accommodation on the subject of the approaching election to the throne of Poland. The Duke believed that Catherine had already made her choice, and that the proposal was a snare to draw from France a confession of her weakness, and to compromise her with her Polish friends. He rejected the overture with almost open disdain, and the occasion drew from the Duc de Praslin an important memorial presented to the King in Council on May 8, 1763, in which the following words occur:—

'Quel est, depuis le traité de Versailles, le pivot de la politique française? L'Autriche. Ce qui fait le contrepoids à cette Puissance doit nous occuper exclusivement. Autrefois cet équilibre était en Suède, maintenant en Prusse. *L'affermissement de ce royaume ne peut pas nous faire ombrage.* Il ne peut effrayer que la Russie, intérêt que n'étant pas le nôtre ne pourrait nous toucher directement.' See *Le Secret du Roi*, par le Duc de Broglie, ii. 72 *et seq.*

Field Marshal Münnich to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Monseigneur,— 26 Déc., 1762: Pétersbourg.

J'ai reçu avec un sensible plaisir les lettres aussi gracieuses que savantes écrites de la main propre de votre Excellence le 14e et le 16e de novembre. Je suis très sensible aux assurances de la gracieuse amitié de votre Excellence et des nouvelles agréables qu'elle me donne de son séjour à Moscou.

Je mande, mot pour mot, à sa Majesté Impériale ce que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'écrire à l'égard de l'accueil très gracieuse de cette incomparable princesse.

Votre Excellence m'obligerait si elle voulait bien me faire part de ses sentiments sur ce que le ministère anglais, malgré les traités, plusieurs fois renouvelés, entre la Grande-Bretagne et le Roi de Prusse, de ne vouloir faire de traité séparé, vient de laisser, en vertu des préliminaires signés à Fontainebleau le 3e novembre, le poids d'une guerre très onéreuse et coûteuse avec la maison fière et redoutable d'Autriche à la charge du Roi de Prusse. Je suis cependant persuadé que cela tournera à l'avantage et à la gloire du Roi de Prusse et que la cour d'Angleterre trouvera les moyens de satisfaire un allié aussi fidèle à la nation anglaise.

Nous avons ici un hiver au moins aussi rude que celui de Moscou, mais nous y sommes faits.

En félicitant votre Excellence sur ces bonnes fêtes et sur le renouvellement de cette année je vous souhaite l'accomplissement de tous les désirs que vous pouvez former. J'espère que cette année nous procurera la satisfaction et le précieux avantage de voir dans ce pays Miladi Bukingham.

Rien ne peut être comparé à l'estime et à la considération avec laquelle je suis, Monseigneur, de votre Excellence le très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

B. C. DE MÜNNICH.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

[*Most secret.*] Moscow: December 28, 1762.

I have been this morning with the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor, and, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, desired them to inform the Empress that the preliminaries [1] were ratified,

[1] Of Fontainebleau, November 3, 1762.

and gave them a copy to present her. We read them over, article by article. They both seemed struck by the advantages England had obtained by the war, and expressed their satisfaction at the conclusion of a peace which they hoped would soon be general.

The Great Chancellor and Prince Galitzin acquainted me that it was her Imperial Majesty's particular desire that I should take the first opportunity of communicating to his Majesty that, as the state of health of the King of Poland was so very precarious, she could not help being solicitous in relation to the election of his successor, as it was most essential to the tranquillity of Russia that the King of Poland should be a friend of theirs; that she was fearful of the views and the intrigues of the French Court; and, as she wished in this and in every instance to act in concert and in confidence with the King of Great Britain, it would give her great satisfaction to know his thoughts and his intentions upon that head. In the course of conversation they fell upon a topic which, as they often recur to, I believe affects them nearly—the unfortunate situation of the House of Austria. I took this opportunity of telling them that I had from my first arrival seen evidently their favourable disposition to that Court, and had in consequence mentioned it in my despatches. They frankly owned it, but added, at the same time, that they wished to live in friendship with the King of Prussia. To-morrow the conversation will necessarily be more diffuse upon that head. I shall take the first opportunity of writing a particular account of what passes. The new Prussian minister,[1] though he has been here three weeks, has never mentioned one word to the Great Chancellor or Prince Galitzin which has the least tendency to business.

Russian Memoranda.

'Her Imperial Majesty at the beginning of her reign was certainly rather favourably inclined to the Court of Vienna,[2] and her confirmation of the advantageous terms granted by her husband to the King of Prussia was not from any regard to that monarch,

[1] Victor Friedrich, Graf von Solms.

[2] The French Government was also convinced that the Court of Vienna was likely to resume its old ascendency at St. Petersburg, and, conscious of Catherine's attitude of enmity to France, showed an uneasy jealousy of any return to the ancient alliance between Russia and Austria. Le Comte de Choiseul et le Comte

but only as she wished, by being at peace with all her neighbours, to be better able to establish that authority of which she must know the most precarious foundation.'

[With this matter of the peace it was now Lord Buckinghamshire's business specially to concern himself. The papers which he had brought with him in relation to it had already been shown to the Empress,[1] and he had since at different intervals[2] received the subsequent chapters in the history of the quarrel between the Courts of London and Berlin. The earlier letters which follow had been in the first instance sent to Keith, with the object of obtaining the concurrence of Peter III. in the peace between France and England.[3]]

Propositions of France.

June 28, 1762.

France consents to evacuate the countries belonging to the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Electorate of Hanover, which are or shall be occupied by the armies of his Majesty and the conquest of which is connected with the British war since the rupture of the Capitulation of Closterseven, and which may be considered as separate from the war between the Empress Queen and the King of Prussia.

But as concerns Wesel, Guelders, and the other countries in Westphalia belonging to the King of Prussia which are actually in the possession of the Empress Queen, and where justice is administered in the name of her Imperial Majesty, the King cannot stipulate that he should cede the conquests of his ally, and such an evacuation can neither legally nor actually be effected without the consent of the Empress Queen and by virtue of an accommodation concluded between her and the King of Prussia.

de Broglie au Baron de Breteuil, August 1762, *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 200, 206.

[1] As related in the despatch of October 25, 1762.

[2] See despatches of November 9 and December 20, 1762.

[3] See Grenville to Keith, July 14, 1762, *Buckinghamshire Papers*. The correspondence and documents which follow are here given together, that the points in controversy may be made clear. See Introduction, p. 47 *et seq.*

The King therefore proposes two things: the first, that Wesel and Guelders should be guarded by French troops until the pacification should become general; the second, that it should be agreed that no troops in the pay of Great Britain should join the King of Prussia or contribute to the operations of that prince against the Empress Queen, their Majesties offering reciprocal sureties on that point. Their Britannic and Most Christian Majesties having thus taken all precautions with which their fidelity towards their respective allies inspires them, may agree to diminish their armies, after the signature of the Preliminaries of Peace, in a proportion which will be agreed upon. The French troops will remain from Frankfort to Mayence and from Mayence to Wesel, and those of England in Westphalia; and these two armies, which may be called *armies of pacification* or *of neutrality*, shall remain in complete suspension of arms, awaiting the effect of the negotiations undertaken by the two Crowns to accelerate the general peace. . . .

Reply and Observations upon the Propositions of France.

July 10, 1762.

As to Wesel, Guelders, and other countries in Westphalia belonging to the King of Prussia which are actually in the possession of the Empress Queen, as the Most Christian King declares himself unable to stipulate for the conquests of his allies, and that such an evacuation could not take place without the consent of the Empress Queen, and in virtue of an accommodation concluded between her and the King of Prussia—the same consideration for the King of Prussia, the ally of Great Britain, makes it impossible for the King of England to agree to any arrangement as to Wesel and Guelders without the consent and approbation of his Prussian Majesty, and the most proper part to take (in case it should be desired that the affairs of Germany should be treated in these preliminaries) is the proposal which the King makes to his Most Christian Majesty to withdraw the armies paid by the two Crowns as soon as the preliminary articles have been signed, and that no troops in the pay of either the Kings of England or of France should return thither whilst the war lasts.

Observations.

The restitution of the countries belonging to the Electorate of Hanover, to the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Duke of Brunswick presents no difficulty. But as to that of Wesel, Guelders, and the other countries belonging to the King of Prussia, it has been considered best not to particularise on that subject in the uncertainty in which we remain as to the ideas of our allies or of France. And as it would be impossible to come to any agreement touching the interests of the King of Prussia and of our other allies without consulting them, and that so many journeys must occasion delays in a negociation which was begun in order to avoid such delays, it was understood that the intention on each side should be to defer the discussion of these matters until the differences were arranged which concern only Great Britain and France, and that then each of those Powers should use his good offices to render the peace general without leaving room for the slightest suspicion that either has failed in fidelity to his allies. [Here follows the enumeration of the articles proposed by France; see pp. 118, 119.]

The consideration which we also owe to our allies and to our treaties does not permit us for our part to agree in any way to arrangements of such consequence to the States of the King of Prussia and to the Empire in general without a previous communication and agreement with that prince, who is so strongly interested in the matter, as well as with the Emperor of Russia, whose declarations, tending to bring about, for the good of humanity, a general accommodation of the present troubles, and particularly of those in Germany, are much in accord with those of his Britannic Majesty.[1]

Mr. Grenville to Mr. Mitchell.

Sir,— July 14, 1762.

By the Earl of Bute's despatch of the 9th April you were enabled and had orders to communicate to the King of Prussia,

[1] This, with the propositions of France (see p. 118), were enclosed in the following letter to Mr. Mitchell of July 14, and also to Mr. Keith at St. Petersburg.

as a fresh mark of the regularity of the King's proceedings, the fresh steps that had been taken towards setting on foot a negociation between Great Britain and France, and as it was his Majesty's intention, in consequence of the assurances before given, to impart to his Prussian Majesty everything that should pass between the two Courts wherein his interest could be concerned, the moment there appeared a favourable disposition in the Court of Versailles towards entering into treaty, you were directed by his Lordship's letter of the 30th of the same month to make it known to that Prince. . . .

I am now to acquaint you that it is not till very lately that the said Court . . . have proceeded to make authentic proposals towards an accommodation of the present differences. It is now, therefore, that I am first enabled to let you know, for the King of Prussia's information, that the Court of Versailles have in a letter from the Count de Choiseul to Lord Egremont of the 28th past, communicated the answer which they had received from Vienna upon his Majesty's declaration, which answer I send you enclosed,[1] with the answer returned from hence of the 10th of this month.

As his Majesty has received through the canal of the French Court this declaration of the sentiments of the Empress Queen, it is his pleasure you should communicate it forthwith to the King of Prussia, together with the answer returned to it from hence, declaring, however, at the same time that in making this communication the King would not by any means be understood to do it as adopting or recommending those specific propositions, but that his Majesty's motives are the discharge of his promise made through you, his disposition to continue the same attention towards

[1] To the effect that the Empress Queen was prepared to send plenipotentiaries to Augsburg to discuss terms of peace, and to offer as a preliminary a suspension of arms *in statu quo*. This offer was communicated to the King of Prussia through the English Court, the English minister at the same time remarking that the proposal would scarcely be accepted by Frederic. 'Hitherto the King had listened with great attention,' writes Mitchell in describing the interview in which these papers were to be communicated, 'but the moment I mentioned Vienna, he said with some impatience, "I expect nothing good from that quarter," and immediately turned the conversation upon indifferent matters,' so that Mitchell was unable to give him at the moment the other papers with which he was charged. Mitchell to Grenville, August 6, 1762. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

his Prussian Majesty, and, lastly, . . . to furnish an opportunity to that Prince of opening any ideas of his own if he shall think fit, in order to the promoting of the great and salutary work of a speedy pacification.

You will observe that the answer returned by the King treats that affair as belonging entirely to his Prussian Majesty, and gives no encouragement whatever to hope for the admission of the proposal made by the Court of Vienna, but refers the whole to what his Majesty may be authorised by that prince to say in relation to it.

As a further proof of that confidence with which the King has always acted towards the King of Prussia, I have his commands to impart to him the proposals made to his Majesty by the Court of Versailles with regard to the other objects of the German war, together with the answers returned by his Majesty's command.[1]

It will be proper for you to observe to the King of Prussia that after so many years' continuance of a war supported almost entirely by Great Britain at so enormous an expense against France in Germany, in pursuance of the King's engagements with his Prussian Majesty by the Treaty of 1756, the proposition to withdraw the armies on both sides and not to suffer any troops paid by Great Britain and France respectively to return into the Empire during the present war, if agreed to, is not only a strict and literal performance of the stipulations of the said Treaty, by which we were engaged to prevent the entrance of all foreign troops into Germany, but at the same time a most advantageous measure to the King of Prussia, by lessening the number of his enemies and contributing so greatly thereby to the safety of his dominions, that it effectually secures his countries of Halberstadt, Magdebourg, &c., from the incursions of the French and all the dangers to which they are exposed in the present situation, and deprives the Queen of Hungary as well of the benefit of such a diversion as of any actual reinforcement from France. That ever since the year 1758, when Great Britain first took upon herself the whole burden of the war, to which the King of Prussia since that time hath contributed little or nothing, the part which seemed to be expected from us has been to make head against France and to secure the dominions of the King of Prussia on that side from the irruption and attack of that formidable power; that

[1] These are the negotiations in relation to Westphalia (see pp. 118, 119, 120).

this expectation is fully answered if the above-mentioned proposal shall take effect; that the King of Prussia is thereby relieved from that part of his engagements, which he has taken jointly with Great Britain, for the keeping of French troops out of the Empire, and at the same time in consequence of the great and happy change in his situation by his treaties of peace and alliance with the Emperor of Russia[1] (upon which his Majesty very sincerely congratulates him), and by the pacification concluded with Sweden,[2] is fully enabled to provide for the defence of all his possessions against any forces that could be brought against them by the Empress Queen, deprived by this means of the assistance of those allies upon whose co-operation the success of all her efforts to recover Silesia principally depended. And lastly, that Great Britain having strictly fulfilled all its engagements, not only during the continuance of this most burthensome war, but also in the present negociation for concluding it, the King persuades himself that the King of Prussia will feel the justice and propriety of the *Resolution* which his Majesty hath taken to ease his subjects from that heavy load of expense (which nothing but necessity could justify) as soon as the Powers with whom he is at war shall consent to such terms as he shall think expedient for the honour and security of his kingdoms.

[The contents of this letter were communicated to Frederic by Mitchell on the same day on which Prince Repnin, the Russian envoy, had formally notified to the King of Prussia Catherine's intention of confirming the Treaty of Peace which had been concluded by Peter III.[3] He was at the same time to make offer of her mediation in favour of peace. Repnin had orders to beg of Frederic some statement of his own views on that subject. Frederic replied 'that his views must vary with his situation'; and, when further pressed, 'that he had already communicated his views to the Emperor.'[4]

Both the English and Russian envoys were convinced that

[1] The Emperor's deposition was not then known in London. [2] Of May 1762.

[3] Of May 5. As to that of alliance of June 18, the King of Prussia said, in answer to Mitchell's inquiry, 'that *that was not to be expected.*'

[4] Mitchell to Grenville, August 6, 1762. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

these evasions were solely to gain time. Frederic was besieging Schweidnitz, whose possession would assure to him the possession of Silesia, and he would not respond to any overtures for peace until it was in his hands.[1] Important as Catherine's friendship was to him, therefore, Repnin could obtain no more definite reply than that the King would communicate with the Empress through Goltz, his minister at St. Petersburg.[2]

Meantime, the first propositions of France as to the King of Prussia's possessions having been refused by England, the Duc de Choiseul, in a despatch of July 21,[3] had proposed two other expedients.

Summary of French Proposals.

'The first expedient is that, France having arranged for the evacuation of the places and countries conquered from the King of Prussia, the Empress should send troops to replace the French troops in the parts they at present occupy. It is true that this has not been expressed in the projects of the Article (enclosed), it not being thought necessary to make an express stipulation; but it was felt necessary not to fail in warning His Britannic Majesty, so that all future dispute or appearance of subtlety might be avoided.'

The second expedient provided for the joint occupation of the disputed provinces by the English and French armies until the peace was concluded, when they would be handed over to the Power to whom that peace decided they should belong, until which time they should continue to be in the possession of the Empress Queen, who should receive their revenues and administer their affairs.]

Reply of the Britannic Court on the Articles proposed by that of Versailles in relation to the War in Germany.

August 1, 1762.

With respect to Wesel and Guelders, as it has always been arranged on both sides that the interests of the allies of both

[1] Schweidnitz fell on October 9, 1762.

[2] Mitchell to Grenville, Aug. 6, 1762. See Bisset's *Memoirs of Sir A. Mitchell.*

[3] *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

Crowns should not be treated without their participation or consent, it scarcely can appear possible that the King could adopt any of the alternatives proposed by France without essentially failing in the engagements which he has contracted with his ally; and the fidelity with which his Most Christian Majesty seeks to fulfil his own engagements makes it certain that he will not propose to the King to be less faithful. For this reason the King flatters himself that S. M. T. C. will approve an expedient which, while it satisfies the delicacy of both monarchs, prevents all possibility of reproach—that is to say, the proposal that *both armies should entirely retire*; and it shall be free to the two Crowns to communicate this Article to their respective allies.

[In answer to all these communications,[1] which Mr. Mitchell was instructed to show to Frederic, he wrote himself to Mitchell: [2]]

Monsieur,— Peterswald: le 15 août 1762.

Je suis très sensible à la communication que vous venez de me faire par ordre du roi votre maître à la suite de votre lettre du 13 de ce mois des nouvelles correspondances entre votre cour et celle de Versailles relativement à la pacification générale. Je ne saurais regarder cette communication de la part de sa Majesté Britannique que comme un nouveau gage de son amitié précieuse et de son intention sincère à vouloir rester religieusement attaché à remplir ses engagements pris avec moi et avec ses autres fidèles alliés; aussi je vous prie de lui en marquer toute ma reconnaissance, et combien je mets ma confiance en sa Majesté qu'elle ne voudra point abandonner dans cette occasion les intérêts d'un allié qui n'a jamais manqué à tout ce que son engagement pris avec la couronne d'Angleterre demande.

Au surplus mes opérations de campagne me tenant fort occupé

[1] This included the suggestion of the Duc de Choiseul that the Empress should send troops to occupy the places upon their evacuation, *though this should not expressly be stipulated.* Frederic was therefore forewarned of that danger.

[2] This letter is printed in Frederic's *Political Correspondence* (vol. xxii. p. 135), with a postscript, intended only for Mitchell, pointing out that the French offer of the evacuation of Hesse was practically worth nothing, as they were about to be forced to evacuate it by the successes of Ferdinand of Brunswick, whilst the evacuation by the French of the possessions of Brunswick and Hanover was not comparable in value to the evacuation of Westphalia, which was demanded in return.

dans le moment présent, vous voudrez bien permettre que je vous remette à ce que mon ministre le comte de Finckenstein, conformément à mes intentions, vient de vous répondre, et je crois avoir tout lieu de me flatter que les raisons y alléguées ne manqueront pas de faire impression à votre cour, dont j'espère d'être bientôt informé par vous. Et sur ce je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait, monsieur, en sa sainte et digne garde.

(*Signé*) FRÉDÉRIC.

Du Comte de Finckenstein à Monsieur Mitchell.[1]

Monsieur,— Berlin : ce 7e d'août 1762.

Le roi à jugé à propos de m'envoyer les copies de la correspondance que la cour d'Angleterre a entretenu depuis quelques mois avec celle de Versailles rélativement à la pacification générale, et que vous avés été chargé de lui communiquer, et S. M. m'a ordonné en même tems de vous témoigner, M., qu'elle n'a pu qu'être très-sensible à cette communication, qu'elle l'envisage comme une nouvelle marque de l'amitié de S. M. Britannique, et qu'animée des mêmes sentimens, qui engagent le roi votre maître à travailler au rétablissement de la tranquillité publique, S. M. n'est pas du tout éloignée de préférer une paix sûre et honorable à une guerre aussi funeste que l'est celle qui désole l'Europe entière et l'Allemagne en particulier depuis tant d'années. Mais en vous faisant une déclaration si conforme aux vues de S. M. Britannique je dois en même tems vous marquer, monsieur, toute la surprise de S. M. en voyant par le contenu des propositions de la cour de France en date du 28e de juin, que cette couronne s'offre d'évacuer tous les pais appartenans au landgrave de Hesse au duc de Brunsvic, et à l'électorat d'Hanovre, et qu'elle prétend cependant retenir les forteresses de Wesel et de Gueldres et les états du roi en Westphalie, qui sont absolument dans le même cas que ceux des susdits princes, et cela sous le prétexte frivole que ce sont les conquêtes de ses alliés, tandis que personne n'ignore que c'est l'armée françoise qui s'est mise en possession de ces places et de ces états dès le commencement de l'année 1757, que c'est en haine des liaisons du roi avec la cour d'Angleterre, et pour faciliter la conquête de l'électorat d'Hanovre, que cette occupation s'est faite, et

[1] Enclosed with Lord Halifax's to the Earl of Buckinghamshire, November 26, 1762.

que c'est cette invasion dans les états de S. M. et non la convention de Closterzeven conclue plusieurs mois après, qui doit être regardée comme le terme de la guerre Britannique en Allemagne. Une distinction si précaire entre le Roi et les autres alliés de la cour d'Angleterre ne peut avoir d'autre but de la part de la France que d'engager S. M. Britannique à lui sacrifier les intérêts de son principal allié, tandis qu'elle veut se ménager la gloire d'avoir rempli tous ses engagemens à l'égard de l'Impératrice Reine, et S. M. a lieu de croire que la cour de Versailles n'auroit jamais osé faire une proposition si singulière, si les bruits, qui se sont répandus dans le public sur les dernières négotiations du roi avec la cour d'Angleterre, ne lui avoient peut-être fait croire, qu'il ne régnoit plus la même intimité entre les deux cours, et qu'elle pourroit obtenir aujourd'hui ce qui lui a été si justement refusé l'année précédente.[1]

Le roi est bien éloigné d'attribuer des sentimens pareils à S. M. Britannique. S. M. croiroit manquer à ce qu'elle lui doit, si elle supposait qu'elle voulût abandonner un allié avec lequel elle a contracté les engagemens les plus solennels, et acquiescer à des conditions qui rendroient S. M. la victime de son attachement pour l'Angleterre. Je suis même chargé, monsieur, de vous témoigner, que c'est avec une satisfaction singulière que le roi à trouvé un nouveau gage de l'amitié de S. M. Britannique dans les pièces que vous lui avés remises, et en particulier dans la déclaration de ne pouvoir prendre aucun arrangement au sujet de Wesel, de Gueldres et des états de Westphalie sans le consentement et l'approbation de S. M. Le roi vous prie, monsieur, d'en marquer sa reconnaissance à S. M. Britannique, et de l'assurer d'un parfait retour de sa part dans tous les cas qui pourront se présenter.

Quant à la déclaration que l'Impératrice Reine a fait passer par l'entremise de la cour de France, S. M., impliquée dans une guerre directe avec la cour de Vienne, croit devoir attendre que ces propositions lui parviennent immédiatement et en droiture, puisque cette affaire est d'une nature à ne pouvoir guères être traitée que de cour à cour, au quel cas, et dès que l'Impératrice Reine

[1] On this point Burke writes: 'The demand of the evacuation of Wesel, Cleves, and Guelders which had been made in the first negotiation (of 1761) was then justly excepted to, because we refused to put an end to the German War. In the last, the French agreed to it, with reason, because we agreed, in common with them, to be neutral in the disputes of the Empire.' *Annual Register*, 1762, p. 55.

jugera à propos d'entrer dans une négotiation immédiate avec S. M., elle ne manquera pas de prendre ces ouvertures en mûre délibération, d'y donner toute l'attention que mérite une affaire de cette importance, et de s'expliquer en conséquence.

C'est là, monsieur, ce que je suis chargé de vous marquer en réponse à la communication que vous avés faite à S. M.: je m'en acquitte avec d'autant plus de plaisir que je ne doute pas que cette réponse ne vous fournisse de nouvelles preuves de l'amitié et de la considération du roi pour S. M. Britannique.

Mr. Grenville to Mr. Mitchell.

St. James's: August 20, 1762.

With regard to Count Finckenstein's answer,[1] as I acquainted you in my former despatch that it was his Majesty's desire to reconcile rather than to inflame any misunderstanding between the two Courts, I shall at present forbear entering into the full discussion of it, and reserve the consideration of the whole (if it shall be necessary) till the arrival of the King of Prussia's answer to the last important and confidential communication made to that Court, and in the meantime shall content myself with observing to you in general that the representation contained in my letter of the 29th of June was founded upon a want of friendship, confidence, and communication from the Court of Breslaw to his Majesty upon the subject of these transactions; but that there is not the least mention made in it of the Convention of 1758, which (as Count Finckenstein truly states it) was renewed from year to year, till the end of the last year, when it expired; that supposing the treaty above-mentioned were still subsisting, the reasonings and distinctions made use of to justify the signature of the treaties with Russia and Sweden, without the participation and inclusion of the Crown of Great Britain, are neither warranted by the letter or spirit of the fourth article of the treaty which the answer refers to, but are in direct contradiction to both; and, lastly, that the communication alleged to have been given was made so late that no answer could possibly be returned from hence before the treaty was concluded and signed.

These observations, I am sensible, are the less necessary to be made to you, as your own discernment will sufficiently show

[1] This refers to a letter of July 14, 1762. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

you the weakness of the reasons, and your situation in a great degree enable you to decide upon the truth of the facts, upon which his justification depends. You must know whether any communication was ever made to you before that which you transmitted to Lord Bute in your letter of 3rd of May, which was received here on the 17th of that month, only five days before the actual signature of the Swedish Treaty.[1] From the knowledge I have of your punctuality and diligence, and from the expressions in your letters complaining of repeated instances of coldness and reserve in the behaviour of the Court of Berlin towards you during the negotiation of the Russian and Swedish treaties, I am fully persuaded that you did not omit to give me the earliest notice you could of those transactions, which I have the more reason to believe as the Prussian ministers here had never informed me of the Swedish treaty, nor even spoken to me on the subject till they delivered to me a copy of it on the 24th of June last.

I am now come to the consideration of your secret and separate despatches of the 6th of August, and have the pleasure to inform you that his Majesty was pleased to express in very gracious terms his approbation of your conduct in apprizing the Russian Minister, Prince Repnin, of the nature of your business with the King of Prussia, and engaging him to deliver (before you had your audience) the message with which he was charged from the Empress of Russia to that Prince. The King considers this as a very fortunate incident, not only as it must in some degree have prepared the King of Prussia's mind to receive those pacific impressions which his Majesty wishes to see him adopt, but also as it is a strong indication of that perfect conformity of sentiments in the Court of Russia which the Empress has directed her minister, Count Woronzow, to express in the most friendly terms to his Majesty, and which cannot fail of having great weight in the present situation.

But whatever effect the interposition of Russia may have hereafter, yet from the account you have transmitted of the King of Prussia's behaviour to Prince Repnin and to yourself, and from the expressions he made use of, the King is convinced of the truth of your observation that his Prussian Majesty's intention is to endeavour, if possible, to gain time; and therefore, as you are aware of that design, his Majesty does not doubt but that in

[1] That of Hamburg, between Prussia and Sweden, May 22, 1762.

your audience from that Prince you have fully explained and declared to him the King's firm resolution of executing without delay the measure of withdrawing the troops paid by Great Britain and France into the dominions of their respective sovereigns, especially as by my despatches to you of the 14th of July and the 2nd of this month, you have already been directed to make this declaration. But as it is of great importance that the fairness and openness of his Majesty's conduct towards his allies, which he has invariably observed as well in the progress of this negotiation as in the course of the war, should be placed in the clearest light, and that there may not be the least foundation for the King of Prussia to complain of any surprise in an affair of this consequence, it is his Majesty's pleasure that you should repeat it again, and declare to that Prince that though it would be matter of infinite satisfaction to the King if he can in any way contribute, consistently with the interests of his own kingdom, to his Prussian Majesty's peace with the Court of Vienna, for which purpose the King will receive with the greatest pleasure any proposal which the King of Prussia shall think fit to make, yet at the same time you are to inform him that as soon as the other differences between Great Britain and France are adjusted, which we may now hope soon to see, his Majesty will not delay signing the preliminaries with the Court of France for carrying into immediate execution the resolution which the King of Prussia has been repeatedly informed that his Majesty has adopted; a resolution strictly conformable to the King's engagements, and indispensably necessary to relieve his subjects from the heavy burthens which they have hitherto laboured under.

Mr. Mitchell to the King of Prussia.[1]

A Breslau, ce 18e septembre 1762.

SIRE,—La nuit d'avant hier j'ai reçu par un courrier des depêches de ma cour datées le 31e du mois, et je les crois de telle importance que je n'ai pas voulu tarder un moment d'en communiquer le contenu à votre Majesté.

Le Roi mon maître et S. M. T. Chrne. sont convenus d'envoyer des ambassadeurs de part et d'autre pour signer tels préliminaires, qui pourront être arrêtés entre les deux cours, en

[1] Forwarded to Lord Buckinghamshire in Lord Halifax's of November 26, 1762.

conséquence de quoi le duc de Bedford devoit être nommé le 1er de ce mois de la part d'Angleterre et le duc de Nivernois, le même jour, de la part de la France. Ces deux seigneurs devroient partir le 6e du courant de Londres et de Paris, afin de se rendre à leurs destinations respectives, les deux cours étant d'accord de retirer immédiatement de l'Allemagne toutes les troupes respectives soudoyées par les deux couronnes.

Je suis aussi ordonné, Sire, de vous faire ressouvenir des applications fréquentes et réitérées faites par ma cour à votre Majesté, il y a déjà plusieurs mois, afin d'être informé de ses vues et de ses intentions à l'égard de la continuation de la guerre, et des moyens de la continuer, ou par rapport aux démarches que votre Majesté pourroit être disposée de prendre pour accommoder ses différends avec l'Impératrice Reine. On n'a pas pu obtenir d'aucun de ces points d'autre réponse qu'une déclaration générale, savoir, *que votre Majesté était résolu de continuer la guerre jusqu'à ce qu'elle pourroit obtenir une paix convenable à ses intérêts et à sa gloire.*

Nonobstant qu'aucune communication n'a jamais été faite par votre Majesté au Roi mon maître de ses traités avec les cours de Russie et de Suède, qu'après qu'ils étoient tous les deux conclus, le Roi m'ordonna de communiquer à votre Majesté les premières démarches de la négociation avec la France, et, en même tems, d'assurer votre Majesté qu'elle seroit exactement informée de toutes choses, rélativement à ses intérêts, qui pourroient se présenter pendant le cours de cette transaction. Les différentes communications que j'ai eu l'honneur de faire de bouche, et par écrit, à votre Majesté, depuis mon arrivée ici, font foi avec quelle fidélité et quelle exactitude le Roy mon maître a rempli cette promesse. En retour à cette ouverture amicale de la part du Roi M. le comte de Finckenstein, dans sa lettre ministériale du 7e d'août,[1] répond, par ordre de votre Majesté, en des termes généraux, *que votre Majesté n'est pas du tout éloignée de préférer une paix sûre et honorable à une guerre aussi funeste que l'est celle qui désole l'Europe entière, et l'Allemagne en particulier, depuis tant d'années,* sans proposer la moindre chose qui pourroit contribuer, en aucune façon, au rétablissement de la tranquillité publique.

Par rapport à Wesel, Gueldres et les autres pays de votre Majesté en Westphalie, on a eu la plus grande attention aux

[1] See p. 126.

intérêts de votre Majesté aussi bien dans la présente que dans la précédente négociation avec la France, comme il paroîtra par les papiers que j'ai eu l'honneur de remettre à votre Majesté,[1] et qui démontrent évidemment la fermeté avec laquelle le Roi a insisté que les troupes françoises devoient être retirées des places et pays appartenans à votre Majesté en Westphalie, aussi bien que des états des autres alliés d'Angleterre en Allemagne. Le Roi a vu avec une très grande surprise que votre Majesté n'a jamais témoigné aucun égard à l'attention amicale qu'on a eue à ses intérêts durant tout le cours de cette négotiation, et particulièrement à ce que le Roi a rejeté pas moins que trois différens projets ou expédiens, proposés par la France, ne voulant jamais écouter ni admettre d'autre proposition que celle de retirer de l'Allemagne toutes les troupes respectives des deux couronnes, préférant cette mesure à tout autre, et cela uniquement en considération qu'il lui paroissoit plus avantageux à votre Majesté qu'aucun des expédiens proposés par la France, comme j'ai eu l'honneur d'en informer votre Majesté par ma lettre du 13^{e} d'août.

Permettez-moi, Sire, de remarquer ici qu'en tout ce que le Roi mon maître a proposé à la France, relativement à la guerre en Allemagne, il a scrupuleusement rempli sa promesse de ne rien stipuler, où il s'agiroit des intérêts de votre Majesté, sans sa connoissance, et de n'entrer dans aucun engagement, à l'égard de ses états et possessions, sans son consentement. En outre le Roi s'est acquitté religieusement de l'obligation où il étoit par le traité de 1756 d'empêcher l'entrée de troupes étrangères dans l'empire, et il a eu toute l'attention possible aux intérêts de votre Majesté, en liant les mains à la France de façon qu'elle ne doit pas donner à l'ennemie de votre Majesté aucun secours, soit en lui fournissant des troupes auxiliaires, soit par les moyens d'une diversion.

En dernier lieu le Roi mon maître n'avoit rien plus à cœur que d'avoir pu ajuster les différends qui subsistent entre votre Majesté et l'Impératrice Reine, si votre Majesté avoit été disposée d'agir de concert, et d'avoir traité cette affaire importante par l'interposition du Roi; mais comme votre Majesté a trouvé à propos de rejeter les offres des bons offices et de l'intervention du Roi, en faisant sa paix avec la cour de Vienne, je suis autorisé de déclarer à votre Majesté que le Roi mon maître ne se mêlera aucunement dans cette négotiation, mais laissera la conduite de

[1] See pp. 118–120.

cette affaire importante à la sagesse de votre Majesté. Le Roi cependant a la satisfaction de croire qu'il y a contribué, en quelque façon, en stipulant avec la France que les troupes de cette couronne devoient se retirer de tous les territoires prussiens, aussi bien que de tous les autres pays et places dans l'empire dont elles ont pris possession durant le cours de la présente guerre.

The Same to the Same.

A Breslau, ce 18e septembre 1762.

Apostille.

Je dois aussi soumettre aux lumières supérieures de votre Majesté quelques remarques qui ont été faites sur la lettre ministériale de M. le comte de Finckenstein en date de Berlin du 7e d'août dernier, savoir,

On observe que ce ministre avance dans la susdite lettre ministériale que *l'armée françoise s'est mise en possession de Wesel, Gueldres et les autres états prussiens en Westphalie, en haine des liaisons du Roi de Prusse avec la cour d'Angleterre, et pour faciliter la conquête de l'électorat d'Hanovre.* A quoi on répond, que l'occupation des dites places et pays par la France a été faite en conséquence de l'invasion de la Saxe par S. M. Prussienne, démarche entièrement désapprouvée et instamment déconseillée par feu le Roi, dont les états électoraux étoient exposés et attaqués à cause de la fidélité de la couronne de la Grande-Bretagne de remplir ses engagemens contractés avec S. M. le Roi de Prusse, l'an 1756, pour prévenir l'entrée des troupes étrangères dans l'empire. Les deux hautes parties contractantes étoient également liées à cet engagement, et obligées de réunir leurs forces pour cet effet, mais au lieu de cela les garnisons Prussiennes ont été retirées de ces forteresses par leur souverain, et à présent il est contesté qu'obtenir la restitution de ces territoires est un devoir, dont la Grande-Bretagne seule devoit s'acquitter. La prétendue omission de ce devoir est traitée comme *un abandonnement d'un allié, une violation des engagemens les plus solennels, et un acquiescement qui rendoit le Roi de Prusse la victime de son attachement pour l'Angleterre.*[1] Mais la réponse Prussienne passe sous silence que l'Angleterre est laissée avec peu ou point de secours à remplir les engagemens réciproques, et à résister seule aux armées de la France après que toutes les

[1] See p. 127.

autres troupes étrangères, en conséquence des traités de S. M. le Roi de Prusse avec la Russie et la Suède, s'étoient retirées de l'empire, et ceci dans une conjoncture lorsque les sujets de sa Majesté avoient à soutenir le fardeau non seulement d'une guerre par mer avec la France, mais aussi l'addition d'une autre contre l'Espagne, et d'une troisième guerre pour la défense de Portugal. On pourroit, à plus juste titre, appeler une telle procédure un abandonnement d'un allié, une violation de la lettre et de l'esprit du dernier engagement subsistant entre les deux couronnes et un sacrifice de la Grande-Bretagne aux intérêts de S. M. Prussienne.

Quant à l'insinuation *que la proposition de retenir les états et pays du Roi de Prusse en Westphalie n'auroit jamais été faite par la cour de France, si les bruits qui se sont répandus dans le public sur les derniers négociations de S. M. le Roi de Prusse avec la cour d'Angleterre ne lui avoient peut-être fait croire qu'il ne régnoit plus la même intimité entre les deux cours*, on n'ignore pas que la France a insisté sur cette proposition jusqu'à la fin de la négociation de l'année passée ; ainsi il n'y a pas lieu de croire qu'elle ne l'auroit pas renouvelée, mais les malheurs et inconvéniens, tels qu'ils puissent être, qui pourront, par de tels bruits, résulter à S. M. le Roi de Prusse, sont uniquement dûs aux soupçons injustes et offensifs qui ont été adoptés et répandus par la cour de Berlin, lesquels n'ont jamais été désavoués, quoique le roi s'est expliqué là-dessus d'une manière claire et incontestable en communiquant à S. M. Prussienne tous les papiers relatifs à cette transaction. Ces soupçons étoient probablement suggérés par les ministres prussiens à Londres, qui ont tâché par leur conduite à aliéner et à créer des mésintelligences entre les deux cours, et contre qui on a déjà porté des plaintes sur ce sujet ; mais comme ces ministres persistent à faire des efforts pour répandre des jalousies et pour soulever des mécontentemens contre le gouvernement du Roi, sa Majesté s'est vue réduite à la nécessité de leur déclarer par son secrétaire d'état, à l'occasion de ce qu'ils se plaignoient d'un manque de confiance, que jusqu'à ce que S. M. le Roi de Prusse auroit des ministres qui abstiendroient de se mêler de ce qui regarde l'intérieur de son royaume, sa Majesté jugeroit à propos de ne faire aucune communication à ce monarque, que par le canal de ses propres ministres qui résident à la cour de S. M. P^ne^. Il faut encore remarquer que la conduite récente de S. M. le Roi de Prusse en refusant à répondre à la déclaration de

l'Impératrice Reine, faite par le canal de la Grande-Bretagne,[1] est le moyen le plus sûr de confirmer la cour de France et l'Europe entière dans la croyance d'un refroidissement entre les deux cours, auquel M. le comte de Finckenstein attribue les propositions présentement faites par la France.

Count Finckenstein to Mr. Mitchell.

Monsieur,— A Berlin, ce 1er d'octobre 1762.

C'est par l'ordre exprès du Roi que je dois vous témoigner la sensibilité de sa Majesté à l'attention obligeante que sa Majesté Britannique a eue de lui faire part de la prochaine arrivée du duc de Bedford à Paris et du duc de Nivernois à Londres pour y traiter de la paix entre les deux cours. Sa Majesté m'a chargé en même tems, monsieur, de vous remercier de la lettre dont vous avez accompagné cette notification.

Mais comme cette même lettre, ainsi que l'apostille que vous y avez jointe par ordre de votre cour, contenait des imputations très graves à la charge du Roi, sa Majesté auroit cru manquer à ce qu'elle se doit à elle-même et à l'amitié qui l'unit à S. M. B. si elle n'avoit cherché à détruire ces imputations, et c'est dans cette vue qu'elle m'a ordonné de vous adresser le mémoire cy-joint, qui sert de réfutation à des reproches qu'elle croit n'avoir aucunement mérités.

Mr. Mitchell to Mr. Grenville.

Sir,— Breslau: Friday, October 8, 1762.

In my letter of the 19th of September by post, I acknowledged the receipt of your important despatch of the 31st of August, and acquainted you at the same time that in obedience to his Majesty's commands I had communicated to the King of Prussia in writing the substance of that despatch. I have now the honour of transmitting to you a copy of the letter I wrote to his Prussian Majesty the 18th of September, and of the *Apostille* that accompanied it. I would fain flatter myself that in making this communication nothing material has been omitted, and as to what mistakes there may be, I trust to your candour for indulgence.

In the letter to the King of Prussia I have attempted to state in a fair but inoffensive light the generous endeavours and

[1] See p. 121, note 1.

advances which the King had made to serve that monarch, notwithstanding of his reserved and unfriendly behaviour for several months past, and I subjoined, by way of postscript upon a separate paper, the observations made upon Count Finckenstein's ministerial letter. The knowledge I have of the King of Prussia's aversion to long papers induced me to chuse this method of communication, and I expected by this means to draw from the King of Prussia himself an answer at least to the letter, though perhaps he might have ordered Count Finckenstein to answer the *Apostille*.

The messenger who carried my letter to the King of Prussia returned hither on the 20th September and brought me a short note from the Cabinet Secretary, informing me that his Prussian Majesty would himself write to me in a very few days. From this I concluded that everything had succeeded to my wish; but after waiting, with great impatience, for upwards of a fortnight, I at last received, on the 5th instant, a letter from Count Finckenstein with a memorial intended to serve as well by way of answer to my letter to the King of Prussia as to the remarks made in the *Apostille*, of both which I send copies here inclosed.

The whole composition of this memorial is of so very extraordinary a nature that I am afraid to venture any observations upon it, especially as I am at present deprived of the use of my papers, from which alone I could be enabled to speak with any degree of precision; but if his Majesty should think proper to order an answer to be made to it, I am persuaded sufficient materials for that purpose will be found in my correspondence with the Earls of Holderness and Bute.

When I consider the time that has been spent in fabricating this memorial and the assurance given me by the Cabinet Secretary, I cannot help concluding that the King of Prussia intended at first to answer the letter himself; but finding the facts suggested in it of an obstinate nature, and that it would be difficult to justify his own conduct set in opposition to that of the King, he directed his Secretary of State to make the best answer he could, which, however, I have reason to believe, has been revised and corrected by his Prussian Majesty.[1]

[1] It is difficult to reconcile these expressions with the insinuation of Frederic that 'poor Mitchell has had a stroke of paralysis on hearing of the continued treachery of MM. les Anglais' (Frederic to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, December 6,

Copie.

MÉMOIRE (A)[1]

Pour servir de Réponse aux Remarques contenues dans la Lettre de Monsieur Mitchell en date du 18^{e} *de Septembre* 1762.

La lettre et l'apostille que M. Mitchell, ministre de S. M. Britannique, a écrites au Roi par ordre de sa cour, contenants plusieurs remarques, par lesquelles il semble qu'on veuille imputer à sa Majesté des manques d'égards et des contraventions de traités pour justifier les mesures que la cour d'Angleterre a prises ou veut prendre encore dans sa négociation avec celle de France, et le Roy croyant avoir satisfait de son côté, avec l'exactitude la plus scrupuleuse, à tout ce qu'on pourroit exiger de la part de l'allié le plus fidèle, il a paru indispensable d'entrer dans une explication amiable sur une matière si intéressante pour les deux cours, et de répondre, pour cet effet, article par article, au contenu de ces remarques.

M^{r} Mitchell fait d'abord mention des instances fréquentes et réitérées faites par sa cour pour savoir les intentions de sa Majesté, par rapport à la continuation de la guerre, ou au rétablissement de sa paix avec l'Impératrice Reine, et il donne à entendre qu'on n'a pas pu obtenir d'autre réponse de la part de sa Majesté que celle qu'elle étoit résolue de continuer la guerre jusqu'à ce qu'elle pût obtenir une paix convenable à sa gloire et ses intérêts.

1762). See for Mitchell's opinion, his letters to Lord Buckinghamshire, February 25, 1764. Keith also, whilst criticising 'the want of good sense and good politics of the English Ministry,' speaks of 'the peevishness, the spite, and the obstinate spirit of vengeance which Frederic had shown on this occasion as little reconcilable with his extensive genius and extraordinary vigour of mind.' See Keith to Mitchell, August 23, 1762, British Museum Add. MS. 6,825.

[1] The order to compose this memorial was sent to Finckenstein, September 18, 1762. On the same day Frederic wrote to his Minister Michel in London that as soon as he should receive the memorial it was to be shown to all his friends in England, in order to contradict the malignant insinuations made against him by the English Ministers. He adds: 'Though I see very well that this will scarcely console me for all the harm which Bute will do me, I flatter myself I shall have the satisfaction in time of seeing Bute overthrown by this means.' This memorial is not printed among Frederic's correspondence. See *Polit. Corresp. Friedrichs des II*^{ten}, vol. xxii. pp. 221, 222.

Comme cette remarque porte vraisemblablement sur l'insinuation qui fut faite par M^r^ Mitchell lui-même au commencement de l'année présente, pour engager sa Majesté à s'ouvrir sur les démarches qu'on pourroit faire pour parvenir à un accommodement avec la cour de Vienne, il importe d'observer ici avant toutes choses que le Roi reçut cette ouverture dans un tems où le changement survenu dans les affaires générales par la mort de l'Impératrice de Russie, et par les dispositions favorables de son successeur, auroient rendu toute démarche à faire vis-à-vis de la cour de Vienne aussi déplacée que préjudiciable aux intérêts de sa Majesté et de la cause commune. C'est aussi ce que sa Majesté fit répondre alors, tant par M^r^ Mitchell que par ses ministres à la cour d'Angleterre, en lui faisant sentir l'inutilité d'une démarche pareille par la conduite que la maison d'Autriche avoit tenue dans tous les tems, et surtout par les vastes projets qu'elle avoit formés dans la guerre présente, en lui faisant envisager la négociation que le Roi avoit entamée avec la cour de Russie, comme le moyen le plus propre pour parvenir au même but, et en déclarant, en même tems, que S. M^té^ ne demandoit pas mieux que de se prêter à un accommodement raisonnable, et que, si elle parloit de continuer la guerre dans le moment actuel, ce n'étoit que pour parvenir d'autant plus sûrement et promptement à une paix convenable à sa gloire et à ses intérêts. Le ministère Britannique ne pouvoit d'ailleurs pas ignorer ce que S. M^té^ entendoit par une paix pareille, puisqu'elle lui avoit fait connoître à différentes reprises, pendant la négociation de l'année dernière, qu'elle ne demandoit que la restitution de ses états tels qu'elle les avoit possédés avant le commencement de la guerre; demande qui devoit paroître d'autant plus juste à la cour d'Angleterre qu'elle avoit garanti elle-même la totalité de ces états, et déclaré plus d'une fois à S. M^té^ pendant le cours de cette guerre qu'elle ne consentiroit jamais au moindre démembrement de ses provinces; demande, enfin qui, indépendamment de sa justice, ne pouvoit plus rencontrer que des difficultés très aisées à surmonter après que la paix avec la cour de Russie, qu'on pouvoit déjà prévoir alors, auroit délivré le Roy d'un de ses principaux ennemis. C'est donc à tort qu'on voudroit imputer à S. M^té^ d'avoir caché ses sentimens à la cour d'Angleterre, ou d'avoir demandé des choses impossibles à obtenir, et ce seroit avec moins de fondement encore qu'on voudroit lui attribuer le dessein de perpétuer une guerre dont ses propres

intérêts, et l'amour de ses peuples, lui auroient fait désirer, il y a long tems, de voir la fin.

Un second grief, qu'on voudroit mettre à la charge du Roi, c'est de n'avoir communiqué à S. M^té^ B^que^ ses traités avec les cours de Russie et de Suède, qu'après leur conclusion. On ne sauroit mieux répondre à ces reproches qu'en répétant ce qui a déjà été dit plus d'une fois sur cette matière, savoir, que S. M. n'a fait aucun mystère à la cour d'Angleterre de ces négociations; qu'elle l'a prévenue sur celle de Pétersbourg, même avant que de l'entamer; qu'elle a fait passer ses premières ouvertures pour cet effet par le canal de M^r^ Mitchell, et par celui de M^r^ Keith; que le baron Goltz ayant été chargé de se concerter sur tout avec ce ministre anglois, et négociant, pour ainsi dire, sous ses yeux, il étoit tout naturel de croire, que sa M^té^ B^que^ seroit informée en droiture de tout ce qui se passoit dans cette affaire beaucoup plutôt qu'elle n'auroit pu l'être par le Roi lui-même; [1] que S. M^té^ n'avoit d'ailleurs pu donner d'abord qu'une instruction vague et générale à son ministre, et qu'elle avoit été obligée de compasser les ordres, qu'elle lui fit tenir par la suite, sur les rapports qu'elle en recevoit; qu'à l'égard de la négociation avec la Suède, sa M. B. en a été également informée par le Roi lui-même avant que les ministres des deux cours fussent arrivés à Hambourg; que sa Majesté ne lui a pas même caché les conditions de cette paix, dont elle pouvoit parler d'avance avec plus de précision que de l'autre; qu'elle lui a déclaré tout de suite que le traité de paix de Stockholm, et le *status quo* avant la guerre serviroient de base et feroient l'essence de cette paix, comme cela est effectivement arrivé, et que la première chose que sa Majesté a faite après la conclusion de l'un et de l'autre de ces traités a été d'en faire lire l'original à M^r^ Mitchell, de lui en communiquer la copie, et de la faire remettre également par le canal de ses ministres à Londres au ministère Britannique, avant que d'attendre l'échange des ratifications. Que pouvoit-on exiger de plus de la part du Roi, à moins que de vouloir prétendre que sa Majesté attendît le consentement de la cour d'Angleterre pour procéder à la signature des traités, ce

[1] The treaty was signed on June 19, 1762, without any communication on the matter to Keith. See Keith's despatch of June 22, p. 51. As to the treaty of peace of May 5, the Prussian ambassador had shown the same reserve, until April 23, when it was too late to communicate with home on the matter. See Keith's despatches of March 30 and April 23, 1762, British Museum Add. MS. 6,825.

qui, vu l'éloignement des lieux, auroit été sujet aux plus grands inconvéniens, et auroit pu faire manquer une affaire qui n'intéressoit pas moins sa M. B. que le Roi lui-même, outre que ces sortes de consentemens ne se demandent jamais que lorsqu'il est question de traiter avec un ennemi commun. C'est le cas de la France, qui n'est pas moins l'ennemi du Roi que de S. M^té^ B^que^ et avec laquelle la cour d'Angleterre ne sauroit conclure la paix, relativement aux affaires d'Allemagne, qu'après un concert préalable avec le Roi et en y comprenant sa Majesté et lui procurant la restitution des provinces envahies par cette couronne; mais ce ne pouvoit pas être le cas des cours de Russie et de Suède, qui n'étoient pas en guerre avec S.M.B.,[1] et dont la paix, de quelque façon qu'elle se fît, ne pouvoit qu'être avantageuse aux intérêts de la cour d'Angleterre.

M^r^ Mitchell passe ensuite à la négociation qui a été renouée, le printems passé, entre la cour de Londres et celle de Versailles, et fait valoir à cette occasion les communications qu'il a été chargé d'en faire, la promesse donnée et remplie, selon lui, de ne rien stipuler au sujet des intérêts du Roi sans son consentement, et l'exécution du traité de 1756 par le soin qu'on a pris de lier les mains à la France, pour qu'elle ne puisse fournir aucun secours à l'Impératrice Reine, soit par des troupes auxiliaires, soit par le moyen d'une diversion, et ce ministre insinue en même tems que S. M. Brit^que^ avoit vu avec une très grande surprise que le Roi n'avoit jamais témoigné aucun égard pour l'attention amicale qu'elle a eue pour ses intérêts; sur quoi l'on ne sauroit se dispenser de rappeler à M^r^ Mitchell les remercîmens affectueux que S. M^té^ l'a chargé de faire lui-même au sujet des susdites communications, et qui se trouvent renouvelés d'ailleurs dans la lettre ministériale du comte de Finckenstein qu'on cite à cette occasion, ainsi que la sensibilité que S. M^té^ a fait témoigner par cette même lettre au sujet de la promesse de ne rien conclure par rapport à ses états d'Allemagne sans être préalablement concerté avec elle. S. M^té^ ne conçoit donc pas ce qui peut avoir donné lieu à

[1] Sweden was, however, subsidised three times by France during the Seven Years' War, and in 1757 she concluded with France and Austria a treaty of alliance against Prussia. The Duc de Choiseul's main object in renewing this treaty in 1759 was to engage the help of Sweden in (1) a descent upon England; (2) the invasion of Hanover. *Flassan*, vi. 146 *et seq.* See also *Recueil des Instructions : Suède*, p. xcvi.

cette insinuation, d'autant plus qu'elle ne pouvoit pas entrer dans de plus grands détails avant que d'avoir vu l'article même des préliminaires qui concerne ses intérêts, et qui ne lui a pas été communiqué jusqu'ici. Elle a trouvé à la vérité dans les communications qui lui ont été faites des projets d'articles par lesquels la cour de France insistoit sur l'occupation des provinces de Westphalie après la paix, et des réponses du ministère Brit^que^, où l'on proposoit la retraite des armées respectives comme le moyen le plus propre à lever cette difficulté, mais elle ignore jusqu'aujourd'huy l'ultimatum de la cour de France sur un sujet si intéressant pour elle, et elle ne sauroit s'empêcher d'observer à cette occasion que la seule retraite des troupes françoises ne rempliroit que très imparfaitement les obligations de la convention de neutralité de l'année 1756 si l'on vouloit différer de remettre le Roi dans la possession actuelle des forteresses et des états que ces mêmes troupes ont envahis pendant le cours de la guerre. S. M. attend donc d'être plus amplement éclaircie sur cette article pour en témoigner sa reconnaissance à la cour d'Angleterre, et jusque là elle ne pouvoit faire autre chose que de se reposer sur l'amitié et sur la bonne foi de S. M. Brit^que^, comme elle le lui a donné à connoître, en déclarant qu'elle étoit bien éloignée de lui attribuer des sentimens contraires, et qu'elle n'avoit aucune doute sur sa fidélité à remplir ses engagemens.

Comme il paroît au reste par la lettre de M^r^ Mitchell que la cour d'Angleterre auroit désiré que S. M^té^ s'expliquât cathégoriquement sur les moyens d'ajuster ses différends avec l'Impératrice Reine, il importe d'observer d'abord que la proposition de la cour de Vienne ne contenoit que l'offre toute simple d'un armistice sur le pied de l'*uti possidetis*, offre dont le ministère Britannique a témoigné lui-même qu'il ne croyoit pas qu'elle fût de nature à être acceptée par le Roi. La cour de Vienne gardant d'ailleurs un profond silence sur les principes de la négociation, S. M^té^ n'avoit pu entrer en discussion sur ce sujet sans préjudicier à ses intérêts ; et comme il s'agit enfin d'une guerre, qui ne regarde directement que le Roi et l'Impératrice Reine, il étoit tout naturel que S. M. désirât d'établir une négociation directe avec cette Princesse, qui, vu la proximité des deux puissances, auroit été, sans contredit, la voye la plus courte et la plus abrégée pour parvenir à cet accommodement. Il n'avoit rien dans cette réponse qui pût désobliger la cour d'Angleterre, et encore moins y a-t-il été question de rejeter les bons offices et l'intervention de S. M.

Brit^que^,[1] dont il n'a pas été fait la moindre mention, ni dans les pièces communiquées ni dans la lettre ministériale du c^te^ de Finckenstein.

Comme cette lettre fait proprement l'objet des remarques contenues dans l'apostille de M^r^ Mitchell, et que ces remarques renferment différens points, dont il n'a jamais été question jusqu'ici entre les deux cours, on va y répondre avec tout le détail que l'importance de la matière exige. On paroît d'abord vouloir mettre en contestation ce qui n'en a jamais fait une de la part de la cour d'Angleterre depuis le commencement de la guerre jusqu'au moment présent, savoir que les provinces que S. M^té^ possède en Westphalie ont été occupées par les troupes françoises en haine des liaisons du Roy avec la cour d'Angleterre,[2] et pour faciliter la conquête de l'électorat d'Hannovre. Personne n'ignore qu'une diversion dans cet électorat a fait dans cette guerre, comme dans toutes les précédentes, le premier projet que la cour de France forma dès les premières apparences de la rupture survenue ensuite à l'occasion des différends de l'Amérique. La cour de France voulut engager S. M. à épouser ses intérêts et à favoriser cette entreprise, et le duc de Nivernois devoit être chargé de cette négociation; feu le Roy d'Angleterre en fut informé et proposa la convention de neutralité de 1756, que le Roy accepta de son côté dans la simple vue de maintenir le repos de l'Allemagne. C'est ce traité que la France n'a jamais pu pardonner au Roy, qui donna occasion à celui de Versailles, et aux liaisons étroites des maisons d'Autriche et de Bourbon, et qui doit être envisagée comme la première cause de cette guerre, et de l'occupation des états de Westphalie qui s'en est ensuivie. S. M. n'a jamais regretté le parti qu'elle a pris dans les vues les plus innocentes, mais elle ne se seroit pas attendue non plus qu'on attribueroit l'occupation de ses états de Westphalie et celle du pays d'Hannovre à l'invasion de la Saxe arrivée plus d'un an après que la conquête de l'électorat

[1] Yet Frederic writes to Michel, on the same day that the order to compose this memorial was despatched, that he now finds it impossible to confide his interests to the English Ministers or to accept of the King of England's Mediation (September 18, 1762).

[2] Yet see the French declaration of March 18, 1756: 'La guerre n'avait éclaté en Allemagne que par le parti que sa Majesté Prussienne avait pris d'envahir la Saxe pour attaquer le royaume de Bohême.' See for this Flassan, vi. 75 *et seq.*

étoit déjà projetée et résolue dans le cabinet de Versailles. Surtout la surprise du Roi a été extrême en apprenant que feu le Roy d'Angleterre devoit avoir entièrement désapprouvé et constamment déconseillé cette occupation de la Saxe, circonstance dont S. M^{té} n'a jamais eu la moindre connoissance, et qui est d'ailleurs notoirement contraire à toutes les déclarations et à toutes les démarches de ce prince. Dès qu'il fut informé des griefs que le Roi avoit à la charge de la cour de Dresde, et des motifs qui l'engageoient à prévenir ses ennemis pour n'être pas prévenu lui-même, il fut le premier à sentir la justice et la nécessité des mesures que S. M. se vit obligée de prendre. Les déclarations qu'il lui a fait faire par ses ministres à Londres, et par M^{r} Mitchell lui-même, le langage qu'il a fait tenir dans toutes les cours étrangères, les liaisons étroites qu'il a contractées avec S. M^{té} pendant le cours même de la guerre, le secours qu'il lui envoya vers la fin de l'année 1759 pour la maintenir dans la possession de la Saxe fournissent les preuves les moins équivoques de sa façon de penser à cet égard. Jamais il n'a varié sur ce sujet, et jamais il n'a été question, pendant tout le cours de son règne, d'un reproche pareil, si contraire d'ailleurs aux sentimens de fermeté qui formoient le caractère de ce prince respectable.

Si S. M^{té} a eu lieu d'être surprise de cette insinuation elle ne l'a pas été moins d'un autre grief qu'on forme, de ce qu'elle se vit obligée de retirer les garnisons qui se trouvoient dans ses forteresses de Westphalie. Le ministère Brit$^{qu^{e}}$ ne sauroit ignorer que si l'on avoit suivi alors le plan de S. M^{té} l'armée alliée auroit pris sa position le long du Rhin, et qu'en ce cas S. M^{té} s'est offerte de laisser dans Wesel la garnison qui y étoit et de défendre cette place. Ce ne fut qu'à son plus grand regret, et sur la résolution prise de se rapprocher du Weser, qu'elle se vit contrainte d'abandonner cette forteresse, pour ne pas perdre de gayeté de cœur les troupes qui y étoient, et qui joignirent dès lors l'armée sous les ordres du duc de Cumberland. Pour ce qui est de Gueldres, il n'en sauroit être question du tout, puisque la garnison qui s'y trouvoit y est restée et a soutenu un siège assez long. En général S. M^{té} ne voit pas comment on peut lui reprocher d'avoir abandonné la cour d'Angleterre, et de n'avoir pas rempli ses engagemens; accablée par une foule d'ennemis, elle n'a pas à la vérité pu faire toute ce qu'elle auroit désiré pour donner à la cour d'Angleterre les preuves les plus fortes de son amitié; mais elle a

du moins la satisfaction d'avoir fait tout ce qui a été en son pouvoir. Elle a soutenu toute seule, pendant plusieurs mois de l'année 1757, les efforts réunis des armées françoises et des autres ennemis qu'elle avoit sur les bras. Elle a mis par la journée de Rosbach l'armée alliée en état de reparoître sur la scène, et d'obliger les François à l'évacuation du pays d'Hanovre. Elle n'a pas fait difficulté, sur les instances de S. M. Brit^que^, de lui céder le chef qu'elle désiroit pour le commandement de cette armée. Elle lui a fourni un corps de troupes qui, quelque petit qu'il fût, ne laissoit pas que d'être considérable, relativement aux circonstances où S. M^té^ se trouvoit elle-même. Elle l'a fait sans y être obligeé par les engagemens qui subsistoient entre les deux cours, et elle ne l'a retiré que lorsque la situation de ses propres affaires l'y obligeoit. Elle a tâché en un mot de payer du plus parfait retour les marques d'amitié que la cour d'Angleterre lui a données. Ce sont des détails dans lesquels on a cru devoir entrer, non pour s'en faire un mérite, mais pour convaincre la cour d'Angleterre elle-même que S. M^té^ n'a jamais mérité le reproche odieux *d'avoir sacrifié la Grande-Bretagne à ses vues et à ses intérêts.*

C'est le Roi qui pourra faire avec raison un reproche pareil, si dans la paix, qui est sur le point d'être conclue, ses intérêts les plus essentiels venoient à être négligés. L'obscurité qui règne sur cet article, si intéressant pour S. M^té^, dans les communications qui lui ont été faites jusqu'ici, l'oblige de suspendre encore son jugement sur cette matière; mais pour écarter toute équivoque et toute ambiguité sur ce sujet, on croit devoir répéter et déclarer ici que la retraite des troupes françoises et l'évacuation des provinces Prussiennes, qu'on fait tant valoir, forment à la vérité un préalable nécessaire, mais ne satisferoient pas à beaucoup près aux engagemens qui subsistent entre les deux cours, si ces provinces au sortir des mains de la France passoient volontairement entre celles de l'Impératrice Reine, ce qui reviendroit au même pour S. M^té^ si la restitution actuelle de ces places et de ces états, de même qu'une égalité parfaite dans le traitement que les deux couronnes se proposent d'observer à l'égard de leurs alliés, n'étoient expressément stipulées dans cette paix. C'est là ce que S. M^té^ est en droit d'attendre non seulement de l'amitié de S. M. Brit^que^, mais encore de la fidélité à remplir ses engagemens. Une conduite contraire ne pourroit être envisagée de sa part que

comme un abandon dans toutes les formes, et cet abandon, qui pourroit être justifié en quelque manière par la nécessité des circonstances s'il venoit à la suite d'une guerre malheureuse, et où les armes de la Grande-Bretagne n'auroient eu aucun succès, deviendroit tout à fait inexcusable au milieu des plus grandes prospérités de cette couronne, et ne pourroit être regardé aujourd'hui que comme l'effet de la mauvaise volonté de quelques personnes qui se sont fait un système de jurisprudence et de droit public, tout différent de ceux qui ont été connus et approuvés jusqu'à présent.

Il ne reste plus qu'à répondre au dernier article de l'apostille de M^r^ Mitchell, où ce ministre forme des plaintes au nom de sa cour de ce que le comte de Finckenstein attribue dans sa lettre ministériale la proposition que la cour de France a faite de retenir les états du Roi, aux bruits qui se sont répandus dans le public sur les dernières négociations de S. M^té^ avec la cour d'Angleterre, et qui lui avoient peut-être fait croire qu'il ne régnoit plus la même intimité entre les deux cours, et où l'on prétend détruire cette supposition en disant que la cour de France avoit insisté sur cette même condition jusqu'à la fin de la négociation de l'année dernière. Tout le monde le sçait, et S. M^té^ conserve encore le souvenir le plus reconnoissant de la manière noble et généreuse avec laquelle cette proposition, également incompatible avec la gloire de la cour d'Angleterre et avec les intérêts de ses alliés, fut rejetée alors par le ministère britannique. Après une déclaration si positive, et dont l'Europe entière a été instruite par la publication que la cour de France en a fait faire, et après les nouvelles conquêtes que la cour d'Angleterre a faites depuis ce tems-là, et qui la mettoient dans le cas d'insister tout au moins sur les conditions de l'année précédente, on avoit, sans doute, lieu de croire que le ministère françois se relâcheroit sur une prétension aussi singulière, ou n'insisteroit du moins pas comme sur une condition *sine qua non*; et la chose étant cependant arrivée, il étoit tout naturel d'en chercher la raison dans les bruits que les dernières négociations entre les deux cours ont fait naître, et qui ne sont malheureusement devenus que trop publics. Ce n'est pas aux ministres du Roi à la cour d'Angleterre qu'il faut s'en prendre. S. M. doit leur rendre la justice qu'il n'a jamais paru dans leurs rapports le moindre vestige d'un dessein de faire naître des mésintelligences

entre les cours. S. M^té^ auroit été la première à les condamner, et elle souffriroit encore moins qu'ils osassent fomenter du mécontentement contre le gouvernement de S. M^té^ Brit^que^;[1] ce n'est pas la cour de Berlin non plus qui a répandu et divulgué ces bruits, elle étoit plutôt intéressée à les étouffer, et elle auroit souhaité que les incidents qui y ont donné lieu n'eussent pas existé, et que le premier des alliés de S. M. Britannique eût été traité avec plus de ménagement dans des écrits publiés en Angleterre même. Comme cette dernière remarque que M^r^ Mitchell a faite par ordre de sa cour porte visiblement sur les négociations secrètes dont le Roi s'est vu obligé de porter ses plaintes à la cour d'Angleterre, on ne sauroit se dispenser d'en toucher un mot ici. Sa Majesté a été sensible à la communication qui lui a été faite des pourparlers avec la cour de Vienne,[2] mais elle en auroit eu plus d'obligation si cette participation lui avoit été faite avant que de les entamer, comme cela se pratique ordinairement entre des cours alliées ; et quant aux insinuations faites à la cour de Russie, sa Majesté auroit voulu pouvoir se faire illusion sur ce sujet, si la dépêche authentique qui les contient et qu'elle a encore entre ses mains ne lui avoit été communiquée par la cour même à qui elle a été adressée. Comment le Roi auroit-il pu révoquer en doute une vérité si clairement constatée, et comment peut-on prétendre après cela que sa Majesté mette le même degré de confiance dans un ministère qui, non content de négocier sous main, et à son insçu, avec son ennemi, cherche encore à traverser ses négociations avec la cour de Russie, qui conseille à un prince favorablement disposé *pour la cause commune de forcer la paix, et d'obliger le Roi à l'acheter à ses dépens, et par des cessions considérables ; qui insinue qu'on ne sauroit se figurer que la cour de Russie voulût préférer l'amitié de S. M^té^ à celle de ses alliés naturels ; qui déclare que la cour de Londres, quelque*

[1] Yet see, *inter alia*, Frederic to Kniphausen and Michel, Sept. 10, 1762, where he enjoins upon his Ministers in London a complete system of warfare against Bute's Government, by pamphlets, satirical prints, and by attempts to get various cities to present addresses to the King to remove Bute. See *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, xxii. 207.

[2] Yet the charge of treachery as to these negotiations is repeated with every term of abhorrence in Frederic's *Memoirs*. See pp. 48 and 49, *Memoirs*, ii. 227: 'Libéral des provinces prussiennes, Bute offrait ses dépouilles à l'impératrice,' he writes, *after* having been shown Bute's instructions in text. See Appendix B.

ardeur qu'elle ait pour obtenir la paix, ne pouvoit cependant pas souhaiter que l'Empereur de Russie rétirât ses troupes de l'armée autrichienne; que cette démarche, bien loin d'accélérer la paix, ne feroit que traîner la guerre en longueur, vu que le Roi sans la coopération de l'Empereur de Russie en faveur de la cour de Vienne resteroit encore longtems en état de continuer la guerre contre l'Impératrice Reine, ce que la cour de Londres ne souhaitoit aucunement, et ne cherchoit au contraire que de sauver le Roi de sa ruine totale, et de l'obliger en même tems à faire des sacrifices raisonnables de ses états?[1] Ce sont les propres termes de cette dépêche dont le contenu révolta le prince qui la reçut, et ne peut inspirer au Roy qu'une juste défiance pour des ministres qui travailloient directement contre ses intérêts, et qui n'ayant pas pu réussir alors paroissent vouloir les sacrifier de nouveau dans la paix dont il est question aujourd'hui.

Malgré tant de justes sujets de plaintes, que le Roi ne rappelle ici qu'à regret, S. M. peut se rendre le témoignage de n'avoir rien négligé pour entretenir et pour cimenter l'amitié de la cour d'Angleterre. Elle croit même en avoir donné de nouvelles preuves dans la négociation qui a été sur le tapis dans les premiers mois de cette année. Le ministère Britannique souhaita que la convention annuelle entre les deux cours ne fût pas expressément renouvelée, et S.M.B. déclara en même tems que le subside stipulé en guise de secours seroit payé tout comme par le passé. S. M. se prêta à cette proposition, quelque préjudiciable qu'elle fût en effet pour ses intérêts. Lorsque cette réponse vint à Londres on déclara qu'elle ne suffisoit pas, et qu'il falloit savoir avant toutes choses si le Roi étoit disposé à faire sa paix avec la cour Vienne, et les démarches que S. M. comptoit de faire pour cet effet. Ce fut alors qu'on fit la réponse dont le précis se trouve au commencement de ce mémoire, et dont chaque expression étoit pour ainsi dire marquée au coin de l'amitié la plus sincère. Le ministère Britannique n'en parut cependant que médiocrement satisfait, et fit naître un nouvel incident, dont il n'avoit pas été question jusqu'alors. C'étoit la communication préalable des instructions du baron de Goltz qu'on exigea avant que de pouvoir prendre une résolution définitive sur le subside. S. M. voyant que les difficultés ne finissoient

[1] These expressions had been emphatically disclaimed by Bute. See p. 170.

pas, aima mieux laisser tomber cette négociation que d'entrer dans des discussions qui n'auroient servi qu'à aigrir les deux cours; et quoiqu'elle se vit privée par là de toute assistance de la part de la cour d'Angleterre dans un tems où la France continuoit à fournir le même secours que par le passé à l'Impératrice Reine, sa Majesté n'en resta pas moins pour cela l'allié fidèle de sa Majesté Britannique, et ne persista pas avec moins de fermeté dans les engagemens qu'elle avoit contractés. Ce simple exposé prouve suffisamment qu'il n'a pas tenu au Roi d'entretenir par tous les soins possibles l'union intime qui a subsisté jusqu'ici entre les deux cours, et dont le maintien lui tiendra également à cœur pour l'avenir.

(The English reply to the Prussian memorial was communicated to Sir Andrew Mitchell with the following letter from Lord Halifax:[1] 'The piece now sent you has been extorted by the necessity of justifying his Majesty's conduct and the reasons of it with a view to the removing of jealousies and suspicions entertained by the King of Prussia, and rectifying the undue constructions put upon it in so many instances by the Prussian memorial. Nothing has been more remote from the King's real intentions than a design of exasperating and inflaming.' At the same time it was announced that there was no thought of printing the memorial unless the King of Prussia should make it necessary by giving the Prussian memorial to the public.[2]

A copy was also sent to Lord Buckinghamshire,[3] 'as the King was very desirous that his past and present behaviour towards the King of Prussia should be rightly understood by the Court of Russia.')

[1] Halifax to Mitchell, November 26, 1762.

[2] It does not appear to have ever been printed, nor, so far as I am aware, was the Prussian memorial. Yet Michel had orders from Frederic II. to print the latter, so as to give it greater publicity. See Frederic to Finckenstein, September 19, 1762. *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, xxii. 229.

[3] Halifax to Buckinghamshire, November 26, 1762. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

MÉMOIRE B

RÉPLIQUE[1] AU MÉMOIRE[2] REMISE PAR MONSIEUR LE COMTE DE FINCKENSTEIN AU SIEUR MITCHELL, MINISTRE PLÉNIPOTENTIAIRE DU ROY DE LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE AUPRÈS DU ROI DE PRUSSE, DANS UNE LETTRE DATÉE À BERLIN, LE 1ER OCTOBRE 1762.

L'objet de ce Mémoire étant de répondre à quelques remarques relatives à la conduite des cours de Londres et de Berlin, l'une vers l'autre, conçues dans des termes les plus mesurés lesquelles le sieur Mitchell avoit mises par ordre du Roi d'une manière très respectueuse et cordiale sous les yeux de sa Majesté Prussienne le 18ème de septembre, on se seroit attendu de la part d'un ministre d'état, parlant par le commandement d'un prince allié et ami, à un peu plus de ménagement dans les expressions, à la vérité toute pure dans les faits, et aux preuves les plus convaincantes dans les imputations. Bien au contraire l'on débute par une supposition injurieuse s'il en fut jamais. On veut que la cour Britannique n'ait eu en vue par les remarques susdites que de se ménager par avance une justification par rapport aux infidélités qu'elle médite envers le Roi de Prusse en imputant les mêmes forfaits, quoiqu'à faux, à ce prince. Voilà le premier échantillon de cette *explication amiable* dans laquelle on promet d'entrer *sur une matière si intéressante aux deux cours*, les premiers effets *de la sensibilité de sa Majesté Prussienne* (selon la lettre du comte de Finckenstein[3]) *à l'attention obligeante que sa Majesté Britannique a eue de lui faire part de la prochaine arrivée du duc de Bedford à Paris et du duc de Nivernois à Londres pour y traiter de la paix entre les deux cours*, paix par laquelle, si on doit ajouter foy à l'imputation susmentionnée, la cour d'Angleterre étoit résolue de trahir les intérêts essentiels de ce même Roi de Prusse.

On jugera par la suite de la réplique qu'on va faire à tout ce qui paroîtra digne d'être relevé dans ce Mémoire du fondement

[1] *Buckinghamshire Papers* (enclosed in Lord Halifax's despatch of November 26).

[2] See *Mémoire* A, p. 137.

[3] Finckenstein to Mitchell, October 1, 1762. *Buckinghamshire Papers.*

sur lequel un dessein aussi noir a été supposé à cette cour. Le contenu de cette pièce extraordinaire sera suivi pas à pas en n'anticipant rien, mais on n'a ni pu ni dû s'abstenir, en entrant dans cette carrière, de marquer la juste indignation avec laquelle on a reçu une accusation si peu conforme à la vérité des faits et aux professions amiables qui l'accompagnent.

La réponse du comte de Finckenstein commence par ce qui a rapport *aux instances fréquentes et réitérées faites par la cour de Londres pour sçavoir les intentions du Roi de Prusse par rapport à la guerre ou au rétablissement de la paix* ; ce qu'on a souhaité de sçavoir c'étoit les conditions sur lesquelles sa Majesté Prussienne pourroit être disposée d'accommoder ses différends avec l'Impératrice Reine.

Sur ce point (dit le Mémoire) on n'a pas pu obtenir, selon monsieur Mitchell,[1] d'autre réponse qu'une déclaration générale, *sçavoir que sa Majesté Prussienne étoit résolue de continuer la guerre jusqu'à ce qu'elle pourroit obtenir une paix convenable à ses intérêts et à sa gloire.* Là-dessus (poursuit-on) il faut observer le tems où ces ouvertures étoient reçues par le Roi de Prusse. C'étoit, à ce qu'on voudroit faire croire, après que la mort de l'Impératrice de la Russie et les dispositions favorables de son successeur lui eussent été connues.

Après avoir fait cette observation (que monsieur Finckenstein veut qu'on fasse avant toutes choses) faisons-en encore une autre, qui sera pour le moins aussi juste et aussi importante. C'est que l'instruction, en suite de laquelle monsieur Mitchell a fait ces ouvertures, a été dépêchée de Londres le 8e du mois de janvier passé, c'est-à-dire trois jours après le décès de l'Impératrice Elisabeth à St.-Pétersbourg, nouvelle qu'on n'a sçue avec certitude en Angleterre que par un courrier de monsieur le prince Galitzin, arrivé le 5e de février. Remarquons aussi que lorsque les ordres susdits de sa Majesté ont été expédiés au sieur Mitchell il n'y avoit que quatre jours d'écoulés depuis la déclaration de guerre contre l'Espagne. Or si la condition du Roi de Prusse se trouvoit améliorée par ce grand événement en Russie dont on ne sçavoit rien en Angleterre, celle de son allié étoit devenue plus difficile à proportion par la nouvelle guerre où l'on alloit entrer.

On n'avoit garde dans les susdites instructions pour le sieur Mitchell de parler d'un événement arrivé en Russie dont on n'a eu

[1] Mitchell to the King of Prussia, September 18, 1762. See p. 131.

la moindre connoissance, mais on y appuya beaucoup sur l'état de détresse où les affaires du Roi de Prusse se trouvoient à la fin de la campagne précédente par la supériorité que les cours alliées de Vienne et de St-Pétersbourg avoient acquise ensuite de la prise de Sweidnitz et de Colberg, aussi bien que sur le changement inopiné qui venoit d'arriver dans celle de la Grande-Bretagne par la rupture récente avec l'Espagne, et par la nécessité où elle devoit se voir bientôt de courir au secours du Roi de Portugal.

C'étoit là les argumens dont on s'est servi pour induire sa Majesté Prussienne à tourner ses pensées vers un accommodement avec la cour de Vienne, mais ces insinuations de la part de sa Majesté Britannique ont été reçues par le Roi de Prusse (à ce que dit le Mémoire) *dans un tems où le changement survenu dans les affaires générales par la mort de l'Impératrice de Russie, et par les dispositions favorables de son successeur, auroient rendu toute démarche à faire vis-à-vis de la cour de Vienne aussi déplacée que préjudiciable aux intérêts de sa Majesté Prussienne et à la cause commune.*

De sçavoir si un changement à l'avantage d'un prince en guerre rend une ouverture pacifique envers son ennemi *déplacée et préjudiciable*, c'est une question qu'il n'est pas besoin de discuter ici, mais que dans le tems que le Roi de Prusse reçut les insinuations susdites de la part de monsieur Mitchell sa Majesté eut déjà connoissance des dispositions favorables du nouvel Empereur Pierre III. C'est ce qu'on ne sauroit accorder, étant certain, que la dépêche de la cour de Londres du 8^{e} janvier n'arriva à Magdebourg, où étoit ce ministre, que la nuit du 17^{e}. Qu'alors et même jusqu'au 20^{e} l'on n'y savoit rien encore de son accession au trône des Russies. Que le Roi de Prusse alors à Breslau n'en reçut la nouvelle que le 18^{e}. Qu'en écrivant à sa Majesté le 22^{3} il ne parloit que de ses espérances fondées sur l'amitié de cet empereur, étant encore Grand-Duc. Que ce prince eut même la condescendance d'employer les bons offices de monsieur Keith,[1] ministre de la Grande-Bretagne en Russie, pour le soutien de ses intérêts à cette occasion critique, et pour le tirer de l'incertitude où il étoit encore par rapport à la conduite que tiendroit la nouvelle cour de Russie envers lui. Qu'enfin le 25^{e} du même mois en donnant les instructions à ses ministres en Angleterre pour répondre aux instances susmentionées de sçavoir à quelles conditions sa Majesté

[1] See Keith to Mitchell, September 19, 1758, and Keith to Holderness, November 13, 1759, Add. MS. 6,825, British Museum.

Prussienne fut disposée de se raccommoder avec la Reine de Hongrie (instructions que monsieur le comte de Finckenstein a communiquées au sieur Mitchell) sa dite Majesté n'étoit encore rien moins que sûre de l'amitié de l'Empereur. Elle y fit seulement mention des avances qu'elle faisoit et des moyens qu'elle mettroit en œuvre pour s'en assurer à mésure que *les dispositions et les vues de la cour de Russie à son égard se développeroient d'avantage.*

Voilà ce qui résulte de l'examen des dates auxquelles on a voulu provoquer, mais on pourroit objecter que les mêmes instances pour que sa Majesté Prussienne s'ouvrît au Roi par rapport aux conditions sur lesquelles elle voudroit faire la paix ont été continuées même après que les bonnes intentions du nouvel Empereur ont été connues à tout le monde; c'est un fait dont la cour de la Grande-Bretagne ne disconviendra certainement pas. Elle a envisagé l'affaire dans un tout autre jour qu'elle n'a paru à celle de Breslau, ayant cru que si on y vouloit sincèrement la paix il ne pourroit y avoir un moment plus favorable pour en faire l'offre à l'Impératrice Reine que celui de l'amélioration des propres affaires du Roi de Prusse ensuite du double avantage de la défection de la Russie du parti Autrichien et de son accession à celui de la Prusse. La cour de Londres avouera même d'avoir travaillé à un dessein aussi salutaire nonobstant un silence des plus rebutants de la part de sa Majesté Prussienne jusqu'à ce que l'éloignement presque total de ce prince d'un côté et le secours effectif promis par le Monarque Russien de l'autre ont fait désespérer de cette poursuite.

C'est à tort (poursuit le Mémoire) *qu'on voudroit imputer au Roi de Prusse d'avoir caché ses sentimens à la cour d'Angleterre, sa Majesté ayant fait connoître à plusieurs reprises pendant la négociation de l'année dernière qu'elle ne demandoit que la restitution de ses états, etc.* C'est l'éclaircissement qu'on donne enfin, après l'avoir tant fait attendre, par rapport aux intentions de ce prince; et on trouve étrange que le ministère Britannique n'ait interprété de soi-même les expressions vagues et générales de sa Majesté Prussienne dans ce sens, comme si après les revers d'une campagne aussi malheureuse que celle de 1761 on eût dû s'attendre à la trouver encore précisément dans les mêmes sentimens au sujet d'un accommodement avec l'Impératrice Reine, où elle se trouvoit au milieu de ses prospérités passées. Le Roi a souhaité pour le bien de l'humanité, pour celui de ses propres royaumes, pour celui enfin du Roi de Prusse même, de sçavoir les conditions sur

lesquelles il pourroit vouloir traiter alors avec cette princesse. La réponse que sa Majesté en a reçue, ne revenoit qu'à ceci : 'Je suis résolu de faire la guerre jusqu'à ce que je pourrai obtenir une paix convenable à mes intérêts et à ma gloire.' Réponse sèche et fière même dans la bouche d'un prince victorieux parlant à son ennemi. Veut-on soutenir que c'est là le langage de la réconnoissance, de la confiance et de la cordialité ? Est-ce ainsi qu'on répond à une puissance amie qui, après s'être épuisée (pour ainsi dire) en subsides pour le soutien de son allié, le voyant avec douleur, ce même allié, dans un état peu éloigné du désespoir, se trouvant elle-même obligée à de nouveaux efforts pour sa propre défense contre une ligue redoubtable, lui conseille la voie de l'accommodement en s'offrant d'y contribuer par tous les moyens possibles, même par la continuation de ce subside devenu dix fois plus onéreux que par le passé ?

Venons à une autre article. Il s'agit maintenant de la communication tardive et inutile des traités conclus par le Roi de Prusse tant avec la Russie qu'avec la Suède. Ce point est touché très légèrement dans la lettre du Sieur Mitchell à sa dite Majesté et quoique le Roi ne pût qu'être sensible au peu d'égard qu'on lui a marqué dans ces transactions, sa Majesté n'a point voulu pourtant en faire le sujet d'une plainte formelle. Elle a souhaité ne pas aigrir les choses en multipliant les discussions entre les deux Cours. Ce n'étoit que pour faire remarquer la différence de la conduite de celle de Londres par rapport à sa négociation avec la France, d'avec celle de la Cour de Berlin en ce qui regardoit les traités susdits qu'on en avoit touché quelque chose.

La chaleur avec laquelle on prétend justifier son procédé là-dedans dans le mémoire demande qu'on examine avec attention ce qui y est mis en avant sur cette matière. Commençons par le traité avec la Russie qu'on a signé à St. Petersbourg le 5e Mai (N. S.) de cette année en avouant qu'il est vrai (comme dit le mémoire) que *sa Majesté Prussienne n'a fait aucun mystère à la Cour d'Angleterre* de la négociation de ce traité avant que de l'entamer. On ne disconvient pas non plus que ce Prince a fait sçavoir au Roi l'envoy du Baron Goltz à St. Petersbourg, et qu'il l'avoit chargé de pleins pouvoirs pour signer la paix si l'Empereur y consentoit ; mais en tombant d'accord de ces circonstances il faut y ajouter, et on le fait sans crainte d'être contredit que ni le Roi de Prusse lui-même ni ses ministres à Londres, ni Monsieur le Comte de Finckenstein à

Berlin ne se sont jamais ouverts au delà de ce qui est dessus, par rapport au contenu des instructions données au dit Baron, soit vagues et générales, soit précises et particulières. On peut assurer même avec vérité, quelqu'incroyable qu'il doive paroître après toute la parade qu'on fait de la confidence de la Cour de Prusse envers celle de la Grande Brétagne, que ce même Monsieur Goltz, qui avoit ordre *de se concerter sur tout avec le ministre Anglois et qui négocioit, pour ainsi dire, sous ses yeux, après avoir* informé Monsieur Keith des pleins pouvoirs qu'il avoit apportés pour signer la paix, ne lui a jamais dit mot au sujet de ses instructions depuis son arrivée à St. Petersbourg le 4e Mars (N. S.) jusqu'au 12e (N. S.) du mois prochain lorsqu'il lui communiqua le projet de son traité tout dressé, qu'on signa effectivement le 5e de Mai (N. S.), qu'on communiqua à Monsieur Mitchell le 22e du même mois et aux ministres du Roi à Londres le 7e Juin.[1]

Comment donc, sa Majesté Britannique auroit-elle été *informée en droiture de tout ce qui se passoit dans cette affaire* par un ministre qui n'en avoit aucune connoissance lui-même? Comment auroit-elle été en etat de faire sçavoir à Monsieur Keith ses sentimens sur le contenu d'un traité qui par l'éloignement des lieux devoit être nécessairement conclu et signé long tems avant que ses instructions auroient pu parvenir aux mains de ce Ministre? L'on sait même très-bien à la Cour de Berlin que loin d'avoir différé la plainte de cette réserve de sa part jusqu'au tems que le traité même ait été communiqué, celle de Londres en a porté au Roy de Prusse, et cela même à plusieurs reprises depuis la connoissance stérile qu'on lui donna de la mission du Baron Goltz jusqu'à la confection même de ce traité. Elle sait de plus qu'à l'égard des engagemens subséquens et de beaucoup plus essentiels aux intérêts du Roi de Prusse, qu'on a pris avec la Russie le 19e du mois de juin (N. S.), on n'en a touché la moindre chose à Monsieur Keith, et que, s'il a été en état de rendre conte à sa Cour de leur contenu dès la veille de la signature de ce second traité, ce n'étoit assurément pas par le canal de Monsieur Goltz qu'il a eu cette communication.

Avec tout cela il ne seroit pas juste de passer sous silence la reconnoissance que sa Majesté Prussienne a témoignée pendant le tems même d'une réserve qui y a si peu répondu de ce qu'elle a

[1] When Mitchell complained of this silence to Frederic he acknowledged that it was by his own instructions, attributing them to the intelligence he had received of the insinuations made to Galitzin. Mitchell to Bute, May 3, 1762.

bien voulu avouer de devoir aux ' soins du Sieur Keith en contribuant à l'entretien de la disposition avantageuse du nouvel Empereur.'

En voilà assez pour la négociation de St. Petersbourg. Il faut maintenant considérer ce qui s'est passé au sujet du traité conclu avec la Suède à Hambourg le 22e du mois de mai 1762 et communiqué le 29e à Monsieur Mitchell et le 24e du mois suivant à Londres. Là-dessus on étale dans le mémoire l'information donnée à sa Majesté Britannique avant que les Ministres des deux cours fussent arrivés à Hambourg, ' que le traité de paix de Stockholm de 1720 et le *status quo* avant la guerre serviroient de base et feroient l'essence de cette paix.' Tout cela est exactement vrai, et on ne le niera pas assurément; mais pourquoi n'y ajoute-t'-on pas les dates tant de l'arrivée du Sieur Olthoff avec les pleins pouvoirs de la Suède à Hambourg que de cette information même qu'on vante tant? Pour y suppléer, il faut observer que ce Ministre n'y vint avec autorité de signer le traité en question que le 17e du mois de mai, c'est à dire cinq jours avant la signature même, et que la dite communication du Roi de Prusse ayant été faite le 2e de ce même mois, n'a été reçue à Londres que le 17e, lorsqu'il étoit assurément trop tard pour que cette Cour pût dire son avis sur un traité qui se devoit signer à Hambourg à 5 jours de là. On ne dissimulera pas non plus que le jour d'après l'arrivée du ministre Suèdois en cette dernière ville, le Sieur Hecht, ministre du Roi de Prusse, fit voir au secrétaire Britannique ses pleins pouvoirs et instructions, mais à quoi ont servi toutes ces marques d'une confiance imparfaite, si ce n'est à convaincre la Cour de Londres, qu'elle avoit déjà eu le malheur de perdre celle dont elle avoit reçu, dans les années précédentes, des preuves autentiques et réelles?

Après avoir ainsi vainement tâché de prouver l'insuffisance de l'imputation d'avoir négligé de faire part au Roy des négociations Prussiennes susdites jusqu'au tems qu'une pareille communication ne peut être d'aucun usage ou valeur, l'on demande avec une espèce de triomphe, *que pourroit-on exiger de plus de la part du Roi de Prusse à moins que de vouloir prétendre que sa Majesté attendît le consentement de la Cour d'Angleterre pour procéder à la signature des traités?* La réponse à cette demande est toute simple. C'est, qu'outre la communication sa Majesté pouvoit encore, vu l'amitié qui a subsistée entre les deux Cours, prétendre à l'inclusion et que pour cette raison on ne devoit pas conclure sans son

consentement, non plus qu'a son insçu. Pour éluder la force d'une si juste prétension le mémoire veut établir une distinction frivole et mal fondée, entre ce qui regarde la situation du Roi de Prusse vis à vis de la France, et celle de sa Majesté, vis à vis de la Russie et de la Suède. On dit *que ces sortes de consentemens ne se demandent jamais que lorsqu'il est question de traiter avec un ennemi commun, que c'est le cas de la France, qui n'est pas moins l'ennemie de sa Majesté Prussienne que de sa Majesté Britannique, mais que ce ne pouvoit être le cas des Cours de Russie et de Suède qui n'étoient pas en guerre avec la Grande Bretagne.* En établissant un parallèle aussi défectueux on croit avoir gain de cause. Mais ne falloit-il pas prendre garde que la Russie et la Suède ont été ennemies de la Grande Bretagne dans le même sens que la France l'a été du Roi de Prusse? C'est à dire que les premières ont été en guerre avec l'allié de la Grande Bretagne et la seconde avec l'allié de sa Majesté Prussienne. Il est sûr qu'il n'y a pas eu de guerre déclarée ni par les deux Cours de Russie et de Suède contre la Grande Bretagne, ni par sa Majesté très Chretienne contre le Roi de Prusse. La seule différence qu'on y voit est que ni la Russie ni la Suède n'ont prêté du secours en troupes à la France contre le Roi de la manière que cette Puissance en a prêté à la Reine de Hongrie contre la Prusse. Elles l'ont pourtant assistée d'une autre manière, en tant qu'elles se sont mises en devoir d'empêcher l'entrée des flottes de sa Majesté dans la Baltique pour la défense de son allié et en ce que par la diversion qu'elles ont faite aux armes de sa Majesté Prussienne elles l'ont empêchée de contribuer autant qu'elle auroit souhaité de faire *dans ce tems-là* au secours de son allié le Roi de la Grande Bretagne.

Ces circonstances considérées, est-on fondé de dire que sa Majesté ne devoit pas s'attendre à être incluse dans les traités dont il est question? Le mémoire le dit pourtant et il va plus loin encore, assurant en termes exprès que *la paix conclue par le Roi de Prusse, et la Suède de quelque façon qu'elle se fît, ne pouvoit qu'être avantageuse aux intérêts de la Cour d'Angleterre.* Il est vrai que pour autant qu'elle a mise le Roi de Prusse plus à son aise, et plus en état de fournir à la défense de sa Majesté contre les armées supérieures de la France, elle pouvoit devenir avantageuse à la Grande Bretagne. Et en cas qu'on en eût véritablement reçu ce bénéfice, on auroit d'autant moins considéré les conséquences dangéreuses auxquelles on a laissé exposé son allié

et ami en ne pourvoyant qu'à ses propres intérêts dans la conclusion de ces traités, car en premieur lieu pour ce qui concerne la Russie la stipulation du traité de 1756 entre le Roi et sa Majesté Prussienne, qui les obligeoient d'unir leurs forces pour empêcher l'entrée des troupes étrangères dans l'Empire, ne regardant pas moins (selon l'opinion commune) celles de la Russie que celles de la France, s'il est vrai, comme on l'assure dans un autre endroit de ce mémoire, que le ressentiment de cette dernière Couronne contre le Roi de Prusse ne prit sa naissance que de ce qu'il étoit entré dans cet engagement ; il y avoit la même cause d'appréhender que la conduite de la Grande Bretagne par rapport à la Russie, étant justement la même à cet égard, elle pourroit penser tôt ou tard à s'en venger. Mais quoiqu'il en soit par rapport à cette Puissance dont l'amitié sincère envers sa Majesté n'est aucunement équivoque et sera toujours la plus estimable à la Grande Bretagne, qu'a-t-on dû penser à la Cour de Berlin de la situation de celle de Londres vis-à-vis de la Suède? Il y a été bien connu que les procédés de cette Couronne envers sa Majesté, n'avoient été depuis un assez long tems rien moins que cordiaux et amiables. Qu'elle avoit même refusé d'admettre un Ministre [1] que le feu Roi lui avoit envoyé dans la vue de cultiver une meilleure intelligence avec elle, sous le prétexte frivole qu'il venoit du quartier du Roi de Prusse ; et qu'en toutes ses démarches elle faisoit remarquer à tout le monde un dévouement sans réserve à la Cour de Versailles dont elle étoit même subsidiaire.[2]

Il résulte de toutes ces réflexions que le droit de sa Majesté d'avoir eu une communication préalable des traités avec les Cours de Russie et de Suède, et d'y être même incluse, étoit aussi clair et indisputable que celui du Roi de Prusse par rapport aux articles préliminaires entre la Grande Bretagne et la France.

Sa Majesté Prussienne prétend de son côté de jouir de ces droits. Bien loin de les lui disputer, la Cour de Londres s'est conformée le plus scrupuleusement à ce qu'ils ont paru exiger d'elle, et ne craint pas assurément la comparaison de sa conduite à ces égards avec celle de la Cour de Berlin. Cette dernière, en négociant des engagements qui importent extrêmement aux intérêts de son allié croit remplir suffisamment son devoir si elle lui dit en général qu'elle les négocie, et si après leur conclusion

[1] Sir John Goodricke. See p. 114.

[2] See p. 44.

ou dans un tems où il est totalement inutile à cet allié d'en être averti, elle lui fait part de leur contenu.

La Cour Britannique, au contraire, dès les premières ouvertures pour une négociation avec la France, promet au Roi de Prusse de ne lui cacher rien de ce qui pourra concerner ses intérêts, et lui tient fidèlement parole pendant tout le cours de cette négociation.

Pour ce qui est de l'inclusion dans les traités à conclure avec d'autres Puissances, sa Majesté Britannique, nonobstant qu'elle se voit totalement oubliée dans ceux du Roi de Prusse avec les couronnes du Nord, ne se croit pourtant pas dispensée des devoirs d'un ami fidèle; elle a soin d'insister absolument sur la retraite des troupes françoises des places conquises sur le Roy de Prusse et ne veut point d'accommodement avec son ennemi, qui lui laisseroit le pouvoir d'aller désormais au secours de son allié contre celui de sa Majesté.

Voyons ce qu'objecte le Mémoire Prussien à l'égard d'une conduite aussi irreprochable.

On dit, en premier lieu, au sujet de la communication, qu'il y a de l'obscurité. 2de: Que la Cour de Breslau n'a pas vu l'article même des *Préliminaires* ni *l'Ultimatum de la France.* Objections recherchées! Monsieur Mitchell a déclaré positivement au Roi de Prusse que sa Majesté insisteroit sur l'évacuation de ses places en Westphalie par les troupes françoises, y a-t-il rien de plus clair?[1] On veut voir l'article même des préliminaires avant qu'il ait été rédigé, et un Ultimatum qui ne pourroit avoir lieu du tout s'il étoit contraire aux conditions sur lesquelles le Roi s'est déclaré de vouloir insister.

Voilà pour la communication préalable; ce qui suit regarde l'inclusion, et comme sur ce chapître on se récrie beaucoup contre une simple évacuation des places conquises et une retraite des armées françoises, insistant que de conclure un traité avec la France sans y stipuler la restitution immédiate au Roi de Prusse de ses places et possessions, seroit un abandon dans toutes les formes et une contravention manifeste aux engagements entre les deux Cours, il ne faut pas négliger de répondre à une accusation aussi grave, et on ne doute pas de se pouvoir justifier sur cet article aux yeux de tous ceux qui veulent juger de la conduite et de la situation actuelle des deux Cours avec candeur et impartialité.

On dit donc premièrement que quoique cette retraite des

[1] See p. 125.

troupes françoises hors des terres de l'Empire avec engagement de n'y plus revenir pour aider à la Cour de Vienne contre sa Majesté Prussienne soit traitée avec mépris dans le mémoire, et qu'on ne daigne pas seulement en réconnoître la moindre obligation au Roi, c'en est pourtant une de la première importance pour les intérêts de ce prince, qui, se voyant déjà délivré, en conséquence de ses propres traités, d'une partie de ses ennemis, n'aura plus depuis cette retraite qu'une seule puissance sur les bras, et ne sera point exposé désormais aux diversions formidables qu'ont essuyées plus d'une fois ses frontières de la part d'un auxiliaire aussi puissant.

C'est, dit-on, un préalable nécessaire, mais *ne satisfait point même, avec l'évacuation des provinces, aux engagemens. Il faut une restitution actuelle de ces places.* Il ne faut pas les *laisser passer aux mains des Autrichiens au sortir de celles de la France.* Pour y répondre on ne disconviendra pas de la garantie générale accordée par les traités antérieurs et renouvelée par celle de 1756 de toutes les possessions réciproques; mais on soutient qu'il faut nécessairement supposer que l'accomplissement effective de cette garantie soit compatible avec la propre sûreté du garand, et qu'elle n'excède pas ses forces. On auroit aussi droit de demander que la partie requérante aide elle-même au recouvrement de ses possessions, et qu'elle n'en laisse pas tomber tout le poids sur la partie requise, mais qu'après avoir dépensé des sommes immenses, et cela pendant plusieurs années, pour l'exécution d'une telle garantie, après avoir vu la condition de la partie qui la demande devenir beaucoup meilleure par la diminution de ses ennemis, et par la restitution des provinces et royaumes entiers qu'on lui avoit conquis, la sienne propre, au contraire, empirer par l'accession d'un nouvel ennemi [1] et par la nécessité de soutenir un autre allié pas moins important à ses intérêts que le premier et incapable de se soutenir de lui-même: si dans ces circonstances dangéreuses, épuisé que l'on est par les efforts qu'on a déjà fait, l'occasion se présente de pouvoir detacher encore un ennemi formidable de la ligue originale,[2] et d'en réduire le

[1] On December 31, 1761, war was declared against Spain, and the defence of Portugal against Spanish forces undertaken by England.

[2] Mitchell had written in 1760, that 'if England could not find some means of detaching France from the coalition, the King must be irretrievably lost.' (Despatch of Jan. 16.)

nombre à un seul en faveur de son allié, seroit-on encore obligé alors, telle étendue et illimitée que soit la garantie en question, de continuer la guerre à tout événement et de sacrifier ses intérêts les plus essentiels à la récupération immédiate de quelques places éloignées, détachées, et par comparaison de peu de valeur, et cela pendant que cet allié à qui elles appartiennent ne contribue de sa part la moindre chose à cette récupération? Une demande de cette sorte peut-elle être justifiée par la raison, par la pratique ordinaire, ou par tel *système* que ce soit de *Jurisprudence* et de *Droit public?*

Ne suffit-il pas pour disculper la Grande Bretagne de la charge d'infidélité à ses engagemens qu'elle se soit évertuée de toutes les manières pour leur accomplissement, que, non contente d'avoir soutenu le Roi de Prusse pendant l'espace de quatre années consécutives par un subside dont il n'y a pas d'exemple dans aucune de ses guerres passées, elle ait entretenu avec cela une très-grosse armée à ses propres dépens, dont sa Majesté Prussienne a retiré un aussi grand avantage que le Roi lui-même, en autant qu'elle a empêché la jonction du moindre détachement des troupes françoises avec celles de la Reine d'Hongrie; qu'outre tout cela, même après que sa dite Majesté s'est vue délivrée des invasions russiennes et suèdoises, la Cour de Londres, quoique surchargée d'une nouvelle guerre de son côté, ait persisté encore à rendre le même service à son allié, en tenant les armées de la France toujours éloignées de sa frontière; qu'ayant continué ce penible effort pendant toute la dernière campagne, elle vienne de la finir avec la guerre même, en stipulant l'évacuation entière de toute l'Allemagne par les troupes de cette Couronne, et en coupant racine, une fois pour toutes, à tout ce que le Roi de Prusse avoit à appréhender de la part d'une Puissance aussi formidable? Ne voilà-t-il pas donc tant les stipulations du Traité de 1756, que celle des traités antérieurs, totalement remplies pour autant qu'elles ont pu regarder la France?

Que si sa Majesté a été obligée, par la nécessité de ses propres circonstances et par l'attention paternelle qu'elle doit aux intérêts et à la sûreté même de ses propres sujets, de se retirer de la guerre, l'occasion se présentant de le pouvoir faire avec honneur sans que le Roi de Prusse soit mis préalablement en possession de toutes ses provinces et places, il est pourtant vrai et indubitable que s'il étoit possible que la Grande Bretagne ait continué à faire encore les mêmes efforts que par le passé, en s'abîmant elle-même elle n'auroit

rien fait de plus essentiel aux avantages de ce prince que ce qu'elle a fait par le traité préliminaire en privant son ennemi de tout secours pour le tems à venir de la part du Roi très Chrétien.

Ainsi elle croit pouvoir prononcer hardiment qu'ayant accompli à la lettre en faveur du Roi de Prusse toutes ses garanties vis à vis de la France, elle n'a non plus manqué en rien, qu'attendu sa propre situation, ses traités précédens ont pu exiger d'elle vis à vis de l'Impératrice Reine.

Comme l'on croit avoir suffisamment répondu à tout ce qui a paru être de quelque poids dans les deux derniers articles touchant les négociations respectives, on ne s'arrêtera qu'un moment pour faire les remarques suivantes.

1°. Si le mémoire Prussien raisonne juste en inférant de l'état où s'est trouvée sa Majesté Prussienne au tems de la signature de ses traités avec la Russie et la Suède, qu'on ne devoit pas risquer leur conclusion pour attendre le consentement de la Grande Bretagne, seroit-il moins vrai que sa Majesté Britannique ne devoit risquer dans l'état où se trouvoient ses propres royaumes la continuation d'une guerre ruineuse, en s'opiniâtrant à ne rien conclure avec la France que ce qu'auroit voulu dicter la Cour de Breslau?

2°. Comme dans un autre endroit de ce mémoire et à une autre occasion on donne à connoître que sa Majesté Prussienne n'a retiré le secours qu'elle avoit prêté au Roi que quand la situation de ses propres affaires l'y obligeoit. Est-elle en droit de se plaindre si le Roi de son côté n'a pas trouvé raisonnable de sacrifier les intérêts et la sûreté de ses propres sujets à la demande d'une restitution immédiate des places de ce Prince en Westphalie?

3°. On est encore à chercher ce qu'on veut qui soit entendu par l'expression qui se trouve dans cet endroit du mémoire qui répond à l'Apostille de Monsieur Mitchell, viz[t] *si ces provinces, au sortir des mains de la France, passoient volontairement entre celles de l'Impératrice Reine*, etc., mais si on a voulu insinuer par là que la Cour Britannique ait consenti à ce que cette Princesse fût mise en possession par la France des places et pays que ses troupes auroient evacués, la réponse de cette Cour est qu'on la soupçonne d'une chose dont elle est incapable.[1] Le Roi remplit ses engagemens avec le Roi de Prusse en faisant sortir les armées de la France des terres de l'Empire Romain et évacuer celles de ce Prince. Sa Majesté auroit souhaité de les faire rendre d'abord à

[1] See pp. 124 and 125, with note.

celui auquel elles appartiennent. Il y a longtems qu'elle l'a prévenu sur ce qu'elle étoit résolue de demander absolument sur cet article. Si après cela on laisse les forteresses au premier occupant ce n'est pas la faute du Roi.

4°. Dans le même endroit il est insisté que le traitement que les deux Couronnes de la Grande Bretagne et de la France se proposent d'observer à l'égard de leurs alliés soit parfaitement égal. Aussi l'est-il sur le pied de la stipulation qui fait part des articles préliminaires et qui a été communiqué au Roi de Prusse long tems avant la signature ensuivie le 3e de ce mois. Si le Roi consent de retirer ses troupes des pays appartenans à quelques princes de l'Empire, amis de la France, cette Couronne en doit user de même par rapport aux alliés de sa Majesté. Si la dite Couronne, en évacuant les places du Roi de Prusse, ne l'en met point d'abord en possession, c'est ce qu'elle a déclaré n'en avoir pas le droit, ne les tenant que pour son alliée l'Impérce Reine, au nom de laquelle la justice s'y est toujours (dit-on) administrée depuis leur prise et les revenus perçus, et qu'ainsi elle ne sauroit y donner les mains sans une contravention formelle à un engagement contraire avec cette alliée, mais que cela ne seroit pas égal d'autant que sa Majesté, dans la reddition des pays ou places qu'elle occupe en Allemagne, ne contravient à aucun engagement avec le Roi de Prusse. Si on allègue de la part de la Cour de Berlin que l'obligation du Roi de les faire rendre à sa Majesté Prussienne est aussi forte que celle de la France de les remettre à la Reine de Hongrie, à la bonne heure ! On ne les rend par le traité préliminaire ni à l'une ni à l'autre de ces Puissances ; on les évacue, on les délaisse, voilà une égalité parfaite.[1]

A l'égard du refus de sa Majesté Prussienne de faire passer par le canal du Roi ce qu'elle auroit à répondre aux propositions de la Reine de Hongrie, il n'y a qu'un mot à dire, c'est que ce prince en est le maître. Il faut pourtant remarquer sur cet article qu'il semble que l'argument qu'on tire pour autoriser ce refus, de ce que la guerre qui subsiste avec l'Impératrice Reine ne regarde directement que le Roi de Prusse, devroit être allégué avec quelque peu de retenue par un prince qui réclame la garantie contre la dite

[1] This seems unanswerable ; for as England was not negotiating with Austria she could not undertake that that Power should abstain from seizing upon Westphalia, seeing that she was still at war with the King of Prussia, nor could France be reasonably expected to *force* her ally to abstain from seizing upon such advantages as might fall to her.

Reine de ce même allié qu'il exclue expressément de tout ce qu'il pourroit négocier avec elle.

Mais il n'y a pas été question, dit le mémoire, de rejeter les bons offices et l'intervention de sa Majesté Britannique. Les instructions du Sieur Mitchell du 14e juillet portoient qu'il devoit, en communiquant au Roi de Prusse les ouvertures que la Cour de Vienne venoit de faire dans ce temps-là à ce prince par le canal de la France, déclarer que c'étoit pour fournir à sa dite Majesté un moyen de pouvoir faire connoître ses sentimens à l'Impératrice Reine par celui du Roi dans l'audience que le Roi de Prusse a bien voulu accorder à ce ministre le 1er août à Dittmansdorf. Il a eu l'honneur d'exécuter cette instruction. Il n'a pas plu en vérité à sa Majesté Prussienne d'y faire de réponse directe, mais dès qu'on a reçu la lettre ministériale du Comte de Finckenstein du 7e d'août, à laquelle ce prince s'est rapporté [1] on y vit en termes clairs et exprès que sa Majesté Prussienne croyoit devoir attendre que les propositions de l'Impératrice Reine lui parvinssent immédiatement et en droiture, puisque cette affaire étoit d'une nature à ne pouvoir jamais être traitée que de Cour à Cour. On a cru qu'il importoit d'entrer dans ce détail pour faire voir sur quoi Monsieur Mitchell s'est fondé, lorsqu'en écrivant le 18e Septre la lettre tant de fois citée au Roi de Prusse, il a dit que sa Majesté Prussienne avoit trouvé à propos de rejeter les offres des bons offices et de l'intervention du Roi.

Le mémoire se récrie ensuite beaucoup sur ce qu'on ne veut pas admettre, que les hostilités de la France en 1757 contre sa Majesté Prussienne se soient commises en haine des liaisons de ce prince en l'année 1756 avec feu le Roi de la Grande Bretagne. L'on a soutenu tout le contraire par la bouche de Monsieur Mitchell [2] et l'on se trouve obligé par la force de la vérité et par l'évidence des dates et des faits mêmes de le soutenir encore. Qu'il soit vrai et indubitable, selon que le mémoire le déclare, que dès l'année 1755 la France ait voulu engager le Roi de Prusse dans le projet de la conquête de l'électorat d'Hanovre,[3] que le Duc de Nivernois devroit être chargé de cette négociation, que cette conquête ait été projetée et résolue dans le Cabinet de Versailles plus d'un an avant l'invasion de la Saxe, on n'ira pas disputer ce qu'on n'a pas été à

[1] See p. 126.

[2] See Mitchell to the King of Prussia (Apostille), September 18, 1762, p. 133.

[3] See for this Knyphausen to Frederic, April 25, 1755, and Frederic to Knyphausen, May 5 and July 29, 1755. Vol. xi. *Pol. Corresp.*

portée de sçavoir, mais que l'invasion Prussienne de la Saxe et de la Bohême ait été la cause immédiate de l'entrée des troupes françoises en Allemagne et de leur occupation des places appartenantes à la Maison de Brandebourg en Westphalie, c'est à quoi on se tient de la part de la Cour de Londres.

Si ce n'étoit que le ressentiment de la Cour de Versailles au sujet de la conduite du Roi de Prusse en s'unissant avec celui de la Grande Bretagne en 1756, pourquoi auroit-elle attendu depuis le mois de janvier de cette année, date de la conclusion de cette alliance, jusqu'à celui de février ou de mars de 1757 pour en donner des preuves? Cette levée de bouclier de la part de cette Couronne se rapporte bien plus naturellement à l'invasion Prussienne susdite qui ne l'a précédée que de cinq ou six mois. Ne nous fions pourtant pas trop à une raison de pure vraisemblance. Voyons les motifs que la France a allégués elle-même. C'étoit dans le mois de février de 1757 que Monsieur d'Affry, Ministre de sa Majesté très-Chrétienne à La Haye, a déclaré par un mémoire remis par ordre de sa Cour aux Etats-Généraux, que le Roi son maître faisoit assembler une armée à la réquisition de plusieurs princes de l'Empire pour l'accomplissement de sa garantie des Traités de Westphalie et pour le secours des princes qui se trouvoient injustement opprimés ou menacés de l'être, et que sa Majesté s'y croyoit obligée même indépendamment de ses engagemens (du 1er May 1756) envers l'Impératrice Reine. Or l'invasion faite par le Roi de Prusse étant survenue dans le mois d'août précédent, peut-on douter de quels princes Monsieur d'Affry a voulu parler? Au moins, n'y a-t-il pas un mot touchant l'Electeur ou l'Electorat d'Hanovre, et on ne pouvoit assurément prétendre que cette Cour eût opprimé personne? On est bien éloigné de dire ou de penser que celle de Berlin l'ait fait, mais il saute aux yeux que l'oppression dont on parle dans le mémoire susdit se doit entendre de l'invasion de la Saxe et de la Bohême; voilà donc la véritable cause des hostilités françoises assignée par la France elle-même. Passons à un argument encore plus décisif.

Dans le mois d'avril 1757, lorsque l'armée de France étoit en marche vers le Weser, la Cour de Vienne a fait offre au feu Roi d'une convention de neutralité pour ses Etats d'Hanovre à condition de laisser passer et repasser librement ses troupes et celles de ses alliés au travers de son pays, et de s'engager de ne point prêter du secours à sa Majesté Prussienne contre sa Majesté

Impériale et le Roi de Pologne Electeur de Saxe.[1] Il semble que cette offre et ces demandes faites par la Cour de Vienne démontrent assez clairement que les troupes françoises, se trouvant déjà au milieu de l'Empire, n'y étoient alors et ne marchoient en avant que pour le secours de sa Majesté Impériale et de son allié contre le Roi de Prusse. Il seroit hors de toute apparence de dire que l'objet de leurs hostilités fût en ce tems-là le Roi-Electeur d'Hanovre, avec lequel cette Princesse, bien loin d'être en guerre, n'avoit point de demêlé ouvert ni rien à appréhender de sa part. Avec tout cela il peut fort bien être que la Cour de Versailles, dans le tems que cette ouverture a été faite par celle de Vienne au feu Roi, ait prévu et qu'elle ait même souhaité le refus qui s'en est ensuivi, pour colorer d'autant mieux l'irruption injuste qu'elle a faite depuis dans l'Electorat d'Hanovre et toutes les hostilités qu'elle y a exercées; mais cela même supposé, il est néanmoins évident que le premier objet de son ressentiment a été le Roi de Prusse et qu'il n'y a le moindre fondement de prétendre que l'occupation de Wesel et le siège de Guèldres se faisoient par la France pour faciliter la conquête d'un pays qui ne l'avoit offensé en rien et lequel elle ne prit le prétexte d'attaquer que d'un refus de laisser passer ses troupes marchant contre le Roi de Prusse, prétexte qui ne lui fut fourni que quelque semaines après ce qui s'étoit passé en Westphalie.

On peut ajouter encore une confirmation des vérités susdites. C'est que dans la mémoire historique publié par la Cour de Versailles, touchant la négociation avec celle de Londres de l'année passée, elle déclare et insiste positivement qu'elle avoit entrepris la guerre en Allemagne uniquement comme garante des Traités de Westphalie,[2] et que cette guerre n'a eu le moindre rapport à celle qui subsistoit entre la France et la Grande Bretagne, jusqu'à ce que par la rupture de la Convention de Closter-Seven arrivée dans l'hiver de l'année 1757 (c'est-à-dire plusieurs mois après qu'elle avoit envahi les places Prussiennes sur le Bas Rhin), elle est devenue guerre angloise.

Au lieu donc de mettre les hostilités de cette Couronne contre le Roi de Prusse à la charge de l'Electorat d'Hanovre, il est de la dernière évidence qu'il faut imputer celles qu'on a exercées avec

[1] See p. 84, note 1.

[2] See the Declaration of France to this effect at the Diet of Ratisbon, March 1759. Flassan, vi. 75 *et seq.*

tant de cruauté dans cet Electorat à la fidélité désintéressée de feue sa Majesté Britannique qui n'a jamais voulu acheter sa propre neutralité au prix d'abandonner la cause de ce Prince, et qui a mieux aimé faire de son propre Electorat un rempart pour la défense de son allié que d'accorder un passage qu'on ne lui avoit demandé que dans la vue de se venger de sa Majesté Prussienne.

La surprise du Roi de Prusse (dit le Mémoire) a été extrême en apprenant que feu le Roi d'Angleterre devoit avoir entièrement désapprouvé et constamment déconseillé l'occupation de la Saxe. On va plus loin : on assure positivement que sa Majesté Prussienne n'a jamais eu la moindre connoissance de cette circonstance. On est fâché de se trouver dans l'obligation de rappeler à la mémoire de ce Prince (et on souhaite de le faire avec tout le respect qui lui est dû) que dans les mois de juillet et d'août de l'année 1756, dont le dernier est l'époque de l'irruption de sa Majesté en Saxe, Monsieur Mitchell a représenté, par ordre de sa Cour réitéré à plusieurs reprises, le danger extrême où elle alloit s'exposer par une démarche telle qu'elle fut qui pourroit être interprétée comme une hostilité et aggression. Qu'un procédé de la sorte ne manqueroit pas d'alarmer tout le parti Catholique, gendarmer les Princes de l'Empire contre elle, attirer les armes de la France et de la Russie en Allemagne, fournir un prétexte à ses ennemis et à ceux du Roi de noircir les engagemens qu'ils venoient de contracter ensemble, et enfin de donner gain de cause à la Cour de Vienne. La réponse qu'il a plu à ce Prince de faire au sujet de ces représentations dans une lettre du 19 août, que le Sieur Mitchell a eu l'honneur de recevoir de sa part, portoit que sa Majesté attendoit la réponse de la Reine d'Hongrie et que si elle ne se trouvoit pas entièrement claire et satisfaisante, elle ne pourroit, sans sacrifier la sûreté de ses États et son honneur même, lui laisser le tems d'exécuter toute la noirceur de ses desseins ; que sentant bien que cette démarche pourroit lui attirer sur les bras une guerre avec la Russie, elle s'y étoit préparée de longue main et que sa Majesté étoit fâchée que le Roi d'Angleterre n'envisageoit pas sa situation, telle qu'elle étoit. Voilà la preuve de ce que l'apostille de la lettre de Monsieur Mitchell du 18ème Sept^{re} a avancé sur ce sujet.

Les prédictions de la Cour de Londres n'ont été que trop vérifiées dans la suite, mais quoiqu'il résulte de ce qu'on vient d'alléguer, que la conduite du Roi de Prusse en commençant le premier les hostilités contre la Cour de Vienne et son allié ait été

contraire tant aux conseils qu'aux sentimens de feu sa Majesté Britannique, on n'a pas dit cependant qu'elle en ait fait après coup des reproches au Roi de Prusse, ou que cela ait diminuée son amitié envers ce Prince, ou qu'il l'avoit rendu moins fidèle à ses engagemens ; tout au contraire, il paroit par les instructions qu'on a fait tenir à Mons^r^ Mitchell dès le moment qu'on eut connoissance à Londres de la résolution absolue que sa Majesté Prussienne avoit prise, en conséquence de la réponse vague et peu satisfaisante de la Cour de Vienne, de commencer sa marche, que ce Ministre devoit assurer le Roi de Prusse que, quoique sa Majesté auroit mieux aimé que cette démarche n'eût pas eu lieu sitôt, cependant, comme il avoit paru à ce Prince qu'il s'y agissoit de sa sûreté, le Roi lui souhaitoit une bonne réussite dans une entreprise d'une telle importance.

Dans ce qui suit, le Mémoire fait un exposé de tout ce que le Roi de Prusse a contribué dès le commencement de la guerre à l'avantage de la cause commune ; mais il n'en étoit pas question. La remarque de Mons^r^ Mitchell ne devoit être entendue que de ce qui s'est passé depuis la pacification qu'on a conclue avec la Russie et la Suède. On reconnoit très volontiers tout le mérite de sa Majesté Prussienne dans la conduite de la guerre et dans l'assistance qu'elle a fournie à son allié, on sait bien que les six bataillons Prussiens de la garnison de Wesel ayant abandonné cette forteresse, se sont joints à Monseigneur le Duc de Cumberland auprès de Bielfeld au commencement de mai 1757, et qu'ayant demeuré avec ce Prince autour de deux mois, ils s'en sont séparés pour aller à Magdebourg l'onzième de juillet, c'est-à-dire quinze jours avant la bataille de Hastenbeck.[1] Que jusqu'en août 1758 il y a eu quinze escadrons et un bataillon franc des Prussiens à l'armée alliée. Que dix de ces escadrons en ont été retirés en 1760, depuis quand il y en est toujours resté cinq avec le dit bataillon. On croit qu'on trouvera ce compte assez exacte. On rend justice aussi aux grandes qualités du général accordé par le Roi de Prusse aux souhaits du feu Roi. On n'oublie point par quelle force de génie il s'est soutenu de campagne en campagne, contre des armées supérieures commandées par l'élite des généraux françois, en les prévenant, repoussant, battant toujours, de sorte que lui seul a fait l'équivalent

[1] The Duke of Cumberland was completely defeated by the French at Hastenbeck, owing to his own defective strategy, and no doubt some reproach is here implied as to the desertion of the Prussian troops before the battle

de tant de bataillons qui manquoient à l'armée alliée. Que le Roi de Prusse en ait rappelé de ses troupes, qu'il ne les ait jamais remplacées, il ne paroit pas que ni le feu Roi ni sa Majesté d'à présent s'en soient formellement plaints ; mais de dire comme fait le Mémoire en termes exprès que sa Majesté Prussienne a fourni un corps de troupes à cette armée, sans y être obligée par les engagemens qui subsistoient entre les deux Cours, c'est ce qu'on n'entend pas. Que le traité parle ; voici ce qu'il en dit a l'article second, 'en cas que contre toute attente etc.' quelque Puissance étrangère fit entrer des troupes dans la dite Allemagne etc., les deux hauts contractans uniront leurs forces pour s'opposer à l'entrée ou au passage de telles troupes étrangères.

Or qu'ayant sur les bras toutes les forces des Autrichiens avec les troupes de quelques Princes et Etats de l'Empire, et étant en même tems dans l'obligation selon le traité et pour sa propre Sûreté de s'opposer à l'entrée des armées russes et suédoises dans l'Empire, le Roi de Prusse fut dispensé d'affoiblir les siennes pour grossir celles du Roi, rien de plus raisonnable, mais dès qu'il a fait sa paix avec la moitié de ses ennemis et qu'il n'y a plus de troupes étrangères de ce côté-là qu'il faut chasser de l'Empire, et que sa Majesté Prussienne n'a en tête que la seule Impératrice Reine, on ne voit plus sur quel fondement de justice sa dite Majesté, qui n'a pas augmenté, depuis un changement où il a tant gagné, d'un seul homme ces cinq escadrons et ce bataillon franc, prétend de se reposer totalement sur son allié pour la restitution de ses places, ni comment on peut insister que cet allié n'est pas en droit de faire sa propre paix avec la Puissance avec laquelle il est directement en guerre sans avoir obtenu cette restitution.

Pour ce qui regarde la conduite des ministres prussiens à la Cour de Londres, sa Majesté a vu avec plaisir un désaveu aussi formel de la part de sa Majesté Prussienne de toutes les peines qu'ils se sont données pour fomenter des jalousies, des mécontentemens et des divisions dans l'intérieur de ce pays. Des intrigues si indignes de leur caractère de ministres publics, aussi peu conformes à l'amitié et aux égards dont le Roi leur maître fait profession envers sa Majesté, et aussi contraires aux intentions de ce Prince selon les assurances que ce Mémoire en donne, ont porté le Roi de leur faire faire par son Sécretaire d'État la déclaration [1] dont il est parlé dans l'apostille de Mons[r] Mitchell ; aussi est-ce une

[1] See pp. 53 and 134.

preuve des plus fortes de la modération de sa Majesté, qu'attendu l'énormité d'une telle conduite elle se soit contentée jusqu'ici d'une manière si peu éclatante de leur faire connoître le déplaisir qu'elle en a justement conçu.

On vient enfin aux pourparlers et aux prétendues négociations secrètes avec les Cours de Vienne et de Russie.

Quant au premier, par le peu qu'on en dit dans le Mémoire il semble qu'on a honte de toucher encore à cette plainte usée et frivole. Et en verité on devroit rougir en faisant seulement mention, après les eclaircissemens tout à fait satisfactoires qu'on a donnés au sujet de cette imputation depuis si long tems, tant par écrit que de vive voix.

Ces eclaircissemens portoient que sur la publication faite du 'Pacte de Famille' entre la France et l'Espagne, et vu le danger qui menaçoit le royaume de Portugal, sa Majesté avoit voulu sonder les sentimens de la Cour de Vienne, pour sçavoir si l'Impératrice Reine ne s'alarmeroit point de la puissance énorme et dangéreuse de la Maison de Bourbon, de l'invasion de ce royaume et des dangers où ses propres étâts en Italie seroient exposés, et si elle ne se laisseroit pas flatter de l'espérance de quelqu'acquisition ultérieure dans ces quartiers en cas qu'elle fut disposée à se joindre aux Puissances qui pourroient vouloir s'opposer aux projets pernicieux de la France et de l'Espagne.[1]

Pour avoir la liberté de s'informer des idées de la Cour de Vienne au sujet du dit 'Pacte de Famille' et de l'invasion de Portugal, comme il n'y étoit pas assurément question des intérêts directs du Roi de Prusse, la Cour de Londres n'a cru aucunement manquer aux devoirs d'une allié et ami fidèle si elle ne demandoit pas préalablement son consentement; et sa Majesté a vu avec étonnement la manière avec laquelle on a traité à la Cour de Berlin une démarche aussi irrépréhensible projetée pour le bien de la cause commune, et dont le Roi de Prusse lui-même devoit tirer les plus grands avantages, en cas qu'elle eût sorti son effet par le détachement de la Reine de Hongrie de l'alliance de la France, en conséquence de la suggestion susdite de l'idée d'une acquisition qui n'auroit rien coûté à ce prince, et en voyant éloigner de ses frontières une guerre qu'il soutenoit avec peine, et dont il couroit grand risque, dans le tems que ces insinuations ont été faites à Vienne, de se trouver

[1] See pp. 47, 51, and Appendix B.

la victime. C'est pourtant ce qu'on qualifie à Berlin du titre odieux de ' négocier sous main, et à l'insçu de sa Majesté Prussienne, avec son ennemi,' persistant toujours à vouloir traiter de négociation clandestine ce qui n'étoit absolument qu'une insinuation une fois faite, des plus simples et des plus innocentes.

Le reproche qui suit, d'avoir traversé ses négociations avec la Cour de Russie, et conseillé à un prince favorablement disposé de forcer la paix et d'obliger le Roi de Prusse de l'acheter à ses dépens etc. est tout aussi bien fondé, aussi juste et aussi véritable que le précédent.[1] Le ministre digne et respectable qui en est l'objet a nié absolument d'avoir jamais tenu le discours qu'on a voulu mettre à sa charge.[2] Il a soutenu que celui dont le Roi de Prusse a la dépêche autentique entre les mains, aura ou mal entendu ses paroles ou mal compris le sens de ce qu'il lui disoit; il a fait plus, il a clairement démontré que ce qu'on lui imputoit étoit hors de toute vraisemblance. En effet, à moins qu'on ne veuille confondre de propos déliberé toutes les marques du vrai et du faux, comment peut-on ajouter foy à des choses qui s'accordent si mal ensemble? Ce ministre, en envoyant les premières instructions du roi depuis la mort de feue l'Impératrice de Russie à l'envoyé Britannique à cette Cour, lui recommenda de soutenir les intérêts du Roi de Prusse auprès du nouvel Empereur; en lui faisant sentir avec combien de plaisir sa Majesté avoit appris que l'ordre étoit déjà donné à ses troupes, de ne plus avancer sur le territoire prussien, de s'abstenir de toutes hostilités et d'accepter même un armistice en cas qu'on le leur offrît. Est-ce là le langage de la même personne qui dit, selon le Mémoire au ministre de cet Empereur ici, que la Cour de Londres ne pouvoit souhaiter que ce Prince retirât ses troupes de l'armée autrichienne?

On veut, en outre, que le ministre susdit ait conseillé à l'Empereur de préférer l'alliance de l'Impératrice Reine à celle du Roi de Prusse. Par les instructions du S^{r} Keith, qu'on vient de citer, il lui est ordonné d'exécuter celles qu'il avoit reçues de la part de sa Majesté Prussienne, que le Roi avoit vues et approuvées, et même celles qu'il en pourroit encore recevoir dans la suite.

[1] See p. 52,

[2] See p. 53. See also Buckinghamshire's despatch of December 30, 1762 (p. 177), and the note verbally communicated to Lord Buckinghamshire by the Russian Ministers, p. 193.

Sa dite Majesté doit sçavoir mieux que personne ce que contenoient ces instructions, et s'il étoit libre à celui qui avoit l'ordre de son maître de les exécuter, de recommander l'alliance d'Autriche. Le Roi de Prusse lui-même (soit dit avec toute la révérence qui est due à un si grand prince) a sçu dans ce tems combien on a été éloigné de traverser ses négociations en Russie.[1] Il a eu la bonté de remercier dans les termes le plus gracieux la personne qui a exécuté les instructions émanées de ce même ministre, que l'on accuse maintenant d'avoir tenu des discours tout à fait contraires à ses intérêts.

Que veut-on d'avantage? Ce ministre, dans cette entrevue et dans le même instant qu'on lui met dans la bouche des propos si outrageux contre sa Majesté Prussienne, avoit par devers lui la copie de ces instructions, qu'il venoit de dépêcher. L'encre dont il les avoit signées étoit à peine séchée. Il semble qu'il faut avoir l'esprit fait aux paradoxes pour pouvoir se persuader qu'un des premiers serviteurs d'un grand roi fût capable d'aller à l'encontre de ses intentions de gayeté de cœur, et cela presque dans le moment de les exécuter, ou qu'il voulût se contredire à lui-même pour avoir le plaisir de désobéir à son maître en trahissant les intérêts de son allié. Est-il possible que, sans être décidé d'avance à condamner à tort et à travers ceux qu'on accuse, on puisse avaler de telles contradictions?

Cet article et le précédent, faisant ce que qualifie l'auteur de ce Mémoire de justes sujets de plainte, et le dernier surtout lui paroissant une vérité clairement constatée, il se croit fondé là-dessus de déclarer que le Roi de Prusse ne pourroit mettre le moindre degré de confiance dans un ministre qui négocioit ainsi sous main, et à son insçu, avec son ennemi, qui a cherché à traverser ses négociations, que travailloit directement contre ses intérêts, et qui enfin, n'ayant pu réussir alors, paroit vouloir le sacrifier de nouveau dans la paix dont il est question aujourd'hui. Il se peut bien, qu'on a déjà cité une partie de ces morceaux brillants du Mémoire du Comte de Finckenstein, mais on ne sauroit rendre trop de justice ni à une manière aussi singulière de répondre aux amitiés qu'on a reconnues et dont on a profité, ni aux conclusions qui sortent si naturellement de leurs prémisses.

Après avoir réfuté ce qu'on appelle les 'Griefs de Mons^r Mitchell' par des récriminations ramassées à droit et à gauche, Monsieur

[1] See Keith's despatches of March 13 and July 23, 1761, &c. See also p. 55.

Finckenstein achève son ouvrage en ajoutant à ce dénombrement, qu'on aura trouvé plus haut, encore d'autres mérites de la Cour de Breslau ; et il en conclut qu'il n'a pas tenu au Roi de Prusse d'entretenir par tous les soins possibles l'union intime qui a subsisté jusqu'ici entre les deux Cours et dont le maintien lui tiendra également à cœur pour l'avenir. On ne désire rien avec plus d'ardeur de ce côté-ci. On peut prononcer avec assurance et dans la plus exacte vérité que les dispositions de sa Majesté, tant par rapport au passé qu'à l'avenir, n'ont cédé jusqu'ici en rien et ne céderont pas désormais à ceux de ce Prince. Il s'en pourroit faire fort aisément une comparaison à laquelle la Cour de Londres ne perdroit assurément pas. Elle ne veut pourtant point de ces parallèles de conduite qui ne valent rien entre des amis et alliés fidèles. Elle se contentera d'exposer sans faire des reproches à personne, non pas ses démarches passées pour s'en glorifier, mais les choses qu'elle n'a pas faites.

En premier lieu elle n'a jamais caché au moindre de ses confédérés ce qui pourroit regarder leurs intérêts dans les négociations où elle a été engagée, beaucoup moins les a-t-elle oubliés tout-à-fait dans les traités qu'elle a conclus.

Elle n'a pas accroché le subside (comme le prétend le mémoire) sur le silence du Roi de Prusse au chapitre de ses instructions données au Baron Goltz, mais à cause de celui qu'il a constamment gardé à l'égard des conditions sur lesquelles il seroit disposé à traiter avec la Cour de Vienne.[1]

Elle n'a pas discontinué finalement de payer ce subside, après y avoir dépensé seize millions d'écus, que jusqu'à ce que sa Majesté Prussienne se trouvoit dans un état où il paroissoit par ses déclarations antérieures, qu'elle n'en auroit plus besoin, ni pendant tout le tems qu'elle-même n'a eu sur les bras que les seules forces de la France, n'étant encore chargée de sa propre défense contre un nouvel ennemi, et de celle d'un autre allié beaucoup plus éloigné et plus incapable de se soutenir, par ses propres moyens, que ne l'a été le Roi de Prusse.

Elle n'a point refusé d'acquiescer et d'ajouter créance à des assurances données et réitérées plusieurs fois par ordre et au nom de son allié, de la fausseté de quelques imputations de mauvaise foi qu'on à mises à sa charge.

[1] See Bute to Knyphausen and Michel, February 26, 1762, and George III. to Frederic II. March 30, 1762. Adolphus's *History of England*, vol. i. Appendix.

Elle n'a jamais prétendu séparer la personne du prince d'avec celles de ses serviteurs en prenant à partie son ministère, et ce qu'on appelle dans le Mémoire du Comte Finckenstein du nom de *quelques personnes*, pour pouvoir à l'abri d'un subterfuge si pitoyable censurer d'autant plus librement la conduite de leur souverain.

Enfin, pour conclure par quelque chose de positif, elle ose déclarer, et elle croit l'avoir prouvé, que depuis l'heureuse époque de son alliance avec le Roi de Prusse elle a souhaité, recherché et mérité l'amitié de ce Prince, et il ne tiendra assurément pas à sa Majesté Britannique que des liaisons cimentées par le sang, par la religion et par un intérêt commun ne soient perpétuelles.

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

St. James's: Dec. 10, 1762.

My Lord,—

Your Excellency's dispatches of the 28th past and 1st instant to Mr. Grenville have been received, and seen by his Majesty, who gave particular attention to what you mention of the [*Cypher*] Austrian minister's gaining ground at Moscow, and of the appearances of the Russian Court's being inclined to promote a reconciliation betwixt the King of Prussia and the Empress Queen. Upon this subject I am to acquaint your Lordship that the King approved your declining to make mention of a first advance towards Count Mercy, as well as of the reason which you mention in consideration of the excessive shyness and reserve which appeared in the answer returned from Vienna some months since to the insinuation made by his Majesty's order from the Hague, an account of which your Lordship found in the reply to the late Prussian Memorial; but though his Majesty thinks you judged that matter right, yet it is not his intention that your Lordship should keep yourself at an affected distance from the Austrian minister, but would rather have you keep up a [measure] of civility and live upon an easy and amicable footing with him; and if you should be sounded either by him or by the Russian minister concerning the King's disposition towards a renewal of the antient system of union between the two Courts, your Lordship will let it be understood that though his Majesty has formed no fixt plan, nor thought of making any direct proposal tending to a reconciliation, yet you

are persuaded from what you know of the sentiments of your Court that it is far from having conceived any implacable animosity towards the Queen of Hungary, being on the contrary very well disposed to a renewal of the former friendship, and ready to give any proofs of such a disposition that may be consistent with her engagements with other Powers.

The Same to the Same.

St. James's: Dec. 21, 1762.

My Lord,—

I send your Excellency herewith copies of letters which I have written, by the King's command, to Sir Joseph Yorke, Mr. Mitchell, and Count Haslang,[1] as also of a dispatch from the Duke de Nivernois to the Duke de Praslin, communicated by him. You will see that the subject of these several pieces is a neutrality with the King of Prussia, which his Majesty has agreed to recommend, in concert with France, to the Princes of the Empire.

The King, being extremely desirous of acting in conjunction with the Empress of Russia in all the great affairs of Europe, has ordered me to send the above dispatches by this messenger to your Excellency, that the contents of them may be communicated without loss of time to her Imperial Majesty. You will therefore, my Lord, make that communication as soon as possible to the ministers of the Court of Moscow, and acquaint them that the King's inducements to come into the above-mentioned measure was not only the prospect of putting a speedy end to the present distractions and troubles in the Empire, which view would be effectually answered by the neutrality proposed, but the probable hope also that an agreement on the part of the Princes and States of that body, to withdraw their respective forces into their own dominions and abstain from all farther hostilities, would be a leading step for setting on foot, and a basis whereon to found a negotiation for reconciling the Courts of Vienna and Berlin: an object which both his Majesty and the Most Christian King are greatly desirous of obtaining, as the happiest consequence that can

[1] These are repetitions of that to Mr. Mitchell, which follows. Sir Joseph Yorke was British ambassador to The Hague.

attend the accommodation of their own particular differences. And your Lordship will proceed to inform those ministers that, as her Imperial Majesty has, from the commencement of her reign, expressed the most earnest wishes for the conclusion of a general pacification, the King has judged that he could not shew to that Princess a greater mark of his friendship and regard than by giving her as early information as the great distance of the respective residences will permit, of the steps which he is himself taking in pursuance of the same principle, and desiring her concurrence therein. And it is accordingly his Majesty's pleasure that, in case this measure shall meet with the Empress's approbation, of which there can be scarce any doubt, considering the great and salutary objects of it, your Lordship should propose and recommend in the King's name to her Imperial Majesty, to contribute her endeavours to the success of it by instructing her ministers in the respective Residences and at the Diet of Ratisbon to coöperate with those of Great Britain and France in disposing the several parties concerned to come immediately into the said Treaty of Neutrality.

[*Enclosure.*]

The Earl of Halifax to Mr. Mitchell.

St. James's: Dec. 17, 1762.

Sir,—

I am very glad to see by the last letters from your Secretary to Mr. Weston that you were recovered from your late dangerous illness.

The occasion of my writing this is to acquaint you that, having had some conversation lately with Messrs. Knyphausen and Michel, in relation to the inruption of the Prussian troops into Franconia and Suabia, and having been assured by those Gentlemen that his Prussian Majesty's only *but* and design in taking that step was to obtain a neutrality on the part of the Circles and States of the Empire, and the withdrawing, in consequence of it, the contingents of troops which they had respectively furnished to the Queen of Hungary into their own dominions, I made an immediate report of those assurances to the King: and his Majesty, understanding by the Duke de Nivernois that very pressing applications have been made to the Court of Versailles to undertake the defence of the Princes of the

Empire in pursuance of their engagements by the Treaty of Westphalia; in order to prevent things falling back into confusion, and as a probable measure towards facilitating an accommodation between the Empress Queen and the King of Prussia, and being likewise desirous of giving every proof of his attention to that Prince's interests, his Majesty determined to do all in his power towards promoting the conclusion of such a Treaty of Neutrality, and ordered me both to acquaint the Prussian ministers, as I have done, with his intentions therein and to sound the dispositions of his Most Christian Majesty upon it through the canal of his ambassador here. I have accordingly had a conference with his Excellency upon that subject, and had the pleasure of finding that his Court would most readily concur with the King in his endeavours to dispose the Princes concerned to come into a measure so evidently intended both for their present security and future interest. His Majesty will therefore lose no time in exerting his influence in the Empire towards bringing to perfection the salutary view above mentioned; and as, in consequence of the declaration made to me, as above, by Messieurs Knyphausen and Michel, there can be no doubt of the King their master's entire approbation, you will lose no time in communicating the contents of this dispatch to his Prussian Majesty; and you will acquaint him at the same time that Monsr. de Nivernois writes this evening to acquaint his Court with the particulars that have passed in the said transaction, and answers for their hearty endeavours to secure the success of this important design in concert with his Majesty.

[*Enclosure.*]

Du Duc de Nivernois au Duc de Praslin.

A Londres le — decembre 1762.

J'avois eu la pensée qu'on pourroit, après la signature de la Neutralité et pour en assurer mieux l'exécution, laisser subsister en corps d'armée d'observation les troupes des cercles qui devront cesser d'agir hostilement contre le Roy de Prusse, et j'en ait fait la proposition à M. Halifax; mais ce ministre regarde comme indispensable que l'armée de l'Empire soit licentiée et le payement des mois[1] Romains cessé, aussitôt après la signature de la Neutralité. Il ne croit pas la chose proposable autrement pour

[1] Monthly payments.

le Roi de Prusse, et il croit qu'une neutralité garantie par la France et par l'Angleterre n'a pas besoin des troupes des cercles pour être respectée; en effet, il seroit, ce me semble, à craindre qu'une pareille proposition ne cabrât S. M. Prussienne et n'excitât dans son esprit les défiances et les ombrages qui pourroient éloigner le but auquel nous tendons, au lieu de l'approcher.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

[*Most secret.*] Moscow: December 30, 1762.

I had not an opportunity till this morning of delivering the other important inclosures [1] of your despatch of the 26th November to the ministers. We read them through together, and I had the pleasure of seeing evidently that they made the proper impression. When we came to that part of the Prussian memorial which mentions that Court's being in possession of Prince Galitzin's authentic despatch which insinuates that it was the wish of the Court of England that the Czar should endeavour to compel the King of Prussia into a Peace, the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor showed the strongest marks of surprise, and desired that his Britannic Majesty might be assured that the paper alluded to was in their hands, that no copy of it had ever been given, and that any information upon that subject could only have been communicated verbally by the Czar to Baron Goltz. The Vice-Chancellor also told me that to the best of his recollection, his expression had been mistaken. The Prussian minister was yesterday with the Chancellor; the object of his visit was to ask if the Court of England had not complained of his master. He was answered in the negative. It was further hinted to me that there is a certain reserve in the behaviour of the Court of Vienna, with which this Government is not pleased. This was mentioned to me in the greatest confidence. I believe the Imperial minister is jealous of the Prussian interest, but unless I am very greatly deceived there is not the shadow of a reason for it, and that it will be the fault of his Court if they do not find a warm friend here. I have received the strongest assurances that her Imperial Majesty is flattered with the many proofs she receives of his Majesty's confidence and convinced of the sincerity of his friendly dispositions towards her.

[1] The Memorials A and B, with accompanying letters.

I must add that I have lately had every reason to be satisfied with the behaviour of the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: January 3, 1763.

The news of the King of Prussia's irruption into the Empire and into Poland has made great impression here. The Vice-Chancellor, the Imperial minister, and the French minister all mentioned it to me last night, expressing very strongly their disapprobation of it, treating it as a breach of the armistice he lately concluded with the Empress Queen. They seemed to wish I should give an opinion upon it, but I contented myself with saying it was a step which appeared to me extraordinary.[1] Her Imperial Majesty took more notice than usual yesterday of the Imperial minister, possibly with an intention of showing her dissatisfaction at the King of Prussia's proceedings. The Ministry despatched a courier a few days ago to Constantinople, and there is a rumour as if there was some uneasiness here with regard to the Turks and Tartars, and that General Czernichew, the same who was last with the King of Prussia, was to take the command upon the borders. I shall try to find out whether there is any foundation for this supposition. I am very sorry to say that I have heard nothing lately of the Treaty of Commerce, which now they will certainly not enter upon till after the holidays.

[1] Lord Buckinghamshire's somewhat colourless remark on the invasion of Saxony offers a curious comment on Frederic's suspicions of the action of England in relation to himself. On December 15 he writes to Knyphausen that he has every reason to believe that the English ambassador in Russia has received strict orders to persuade the Russian Court to force him to make peace and to evacuate Saxony on the most ignominious conditions. No trace of such instructions is to be found in Lord Halifax's despatches to St. Petersburg. On the other hand, Frederic, in one of the first letters which he wrote to Catherine (December 22, 1762), did not fail to point out that 'the Britannic ministry had, in defiance of all treaties and alliance, determined that he should sacrifice his interests to theirs, and had immolated him for their own advantage in their peace with France.' See *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's*, xxii. pp. 395 and 409.

Prussian memorial delivered, December 27, 1762.[1]

C'est par un ordre exprès du Roi leur maître que les soussignés ministres de S. M. le Roi de Prusse ont l'honneur de remercier en son nom S. M. Britannique de la communication qu'elle lui à fait faire par son ministre résident à sa Cour, le S^r^ Mitchell, de quelques articles des préliminaires relatifs aux affaires d'Allemagne.

Sa Majesté, reconnaissant cette participation comme une marque de confiance de S. M. Britannique, y auroit été bien plus sensible encore si elle s'étoit faite à la suite des communications précédentes, si on lui avoit fait part alors *in extenso* du projet des articles cy-dessus mentionnés, ainsi que cela s'observe ordinairement entre des Puissances amies et alliées, lorsqu'il s'agit d'intérêts communs et essentiels pour l'une ou l'autre des deux Cours, puisque le Roi auroit été en état par là de se concerter plus particulièrement avec S. M. Britannique et de faire des représentations convenables sur plusieurs clauses contenues dans les susdits articles aussi préjudiciables aux intérêts de S. M. que contraires aux engagements qui subsistent entre les deux Cours.

S. M. se rappellera ici de ceux d'entre les engagements qui ont un rapport direct à la guerre présente, savoir la Convention de Neutralité de l'année 1756, qui par les alliances qui s'en sont ensuivies entre les Puissances ennemies, peut être regardée comme la cause innocente de cette guerre, et le Traité de Subsides conclu en 1758 pour se concerter d'une manière plus particulière tant sur la façon de faire la paix que sur les moyens de pousser la guerre. Par le premier de ces engagements les deux Puissances se sont obligées à s'opposer de toute leur force à l'entrée des troupes étrangères en Allemagne, ce qui implique nécessairement dans le cas d'une future paix la restitution des états que ces troupes étrangères auroient conquises sur l'une ou l'autre des deux parties contractantes, puisque sans cela cet engagement auroit été nul, et d'aucun fruit pour les deux Cours. Par la Convention des Subsides, qui confirme tous les traités précédens, il a été stipulé expressément dans l'Article 4 que les deux Puissances ne concluroient aucun traité de paix, de trêve, ou de neutralité, ni

[1] In Lord Halifax's of January 7, 1763.

aucune convention de quelque nature qu'elle pût être, avec les Puissances ennemies, que de concert, et en s'y comprenant nommément, et quoique depuis la fin de l'année 1761 la Cour d'Angleterre n'ait pas jugé à propos de renouveler cette Convention, comme cela s'était pratiqué jusqu'alors pour déterminer la manière dont les parties contractantes s'assisteroient chaque année, selon les circonstances il est clair cependant que l'Article 4, qui par sa nature porte visiblement sur toute la durée de la guerre, subsiste toujours dans son entier, et que le refus de ce renouvellement n'a pu porter aucune atteinte à l'alliance entre les deux Cours que S. M. Britannique elle-même a fait valoir en plus d'une occasion depuis ce temps-là. Le Roi auroit pu prétendre en conséquence de ces traités, et en particulier du dernier, de concourir immédiatement et en qualité de principale partie contractante à la négociation de la paix entre LL. MM. Brit^que^ et T. C. en tant qu'elle concernoit l'Allemagne. Mais S. M., bien éloignée de vouloir gêner la Cour d'Angleterre et rétarder par là le rétablissement de la paix entre les Cours de Londres et de Versailles, se désista d'une condition si avantageuse pour elle et donna les mains à la négociation d'une paix séparée dès qu'il en fut question en 1760, en se réservant néanmoins qu'elle seroit comprise dans cette paix, que ces Etats et forteresses de Westphalie lui seroient restitués par la Cour de France et que la Cour d'Angleterre continueroit à l'assister jusqu'à la paix générale de la manière dont on pourroit en convenir par une Convention particulière. Ces conditions étoient justes et raisonnables. . . . S. M. Brit^que^ parut convaincue de leur justice, et son ministère travailla sur ce plan lors des missions respectives de MM. Stanley et Bussi, avec une fermeté que S. M. ne sauroit se rappeler sans ressentir les mouvements de la plus vive reconnaissance, et qui étant soutenue n'auroit pu manquer d'obtenir le but désiré et d'effectuer une paix aussi glorieuse pour la Cour d'Angleterre qu'avantageuse pour ses alliés.

Le Roi n'avoit aucun doute sur ce sujet; il étoit en droit de l'attendre de l'amitié de S. M. Brit^que^, de l'accomplissement des traités et des nouvelles conquêtes que ses armes venoient de remporter dans les différentes parties du monde et qui la mettoient à plus forte raison dans le cas de pouvoir insister hautement sur ce qu'elle avoit déjá exigé. . . . Ce n'a donc pu être qu'avec la plus grande surprise que le Roi a appris qu'on avoit passé outre sur un

article si essentiel et si intéressant pour elle, sans faire la moindre attention à ses intérêts et qu'elle a trouvé dans les articles des préliminaires que M. Mitchell vient de lui communiquer, une distinction peu amicale entre S. M. Britque en Allemagne, en faveur desquels on a exigé, comme de raison, la restitution de tous leurs états, tandis qu'on s'est contenté de stipuler la simple évacuation de ceux du Roi, distinction qui indique clairement un dessein formé de la part de la Cour de France de faire passer ces états entre les mains de l'Impératrice Reine et à laquelle S. M. avoit d'autant moins lieu de croire que le Ministère Britque voudroient se prêter, que les ministres français s'én étoient clairement expliqués sur ce pied que la position arvantageuse où la Cour d'Angleterre se trouvoit, lui fournissoit de nouveaux argumens pour combattre les difficultés qu'on lui opposoit et que la gloire de la Grande Bretagne sembloit exiger elle-même qu'on ne se relachât pas sur cet article.

En effet, si la Cour de Versailles avait disposé de ces états par des engagemens contractés avec la Cour de Vienne pendant le cours de la guerre, ces engagemens n'étaient pas obligatoires pour S. M. Britque, elle en avait elle-même de tout contraires avec son allié; elle pouvoit prétendre de les remplir avec la même délicatesse que la Cour de Versailles vouloit apporter aux siens, et outre les circonstances où elle se trouvoit, et qui la mettoit en droit d'exiger quelque préférence dans l'accomplissement de deux traités opposés, elle sembloit pouvoir y insister avec d'autant plus de raison qu'il ne s'agissoit de la part de la Cour d'Angleterre que de faire restituer au Roi un pays qui lui appartenoit et qui n'avoit été envahi qu'en haine des engagemens avec elle et pour parvenir d'autant mieux à la conquête de l'Electorat de Hanovre, au lieu que la prétension de la Cour de France ne visoit pas à moins qu'à mettre la Cour de Vienne en possession d'une nouvelle conquête et à frustrer S. M. du seul avantage que pouvoit lui revenir sur cette paix.

Mais si le Roi a dû être surpris d'une stipulation pareille, il ne l'a pas moins été de ce que l'Article 13 des Préliminaires lui a été communiqué sous deux formes différentes et de ce que le changement qu'on y a apporté ne consiste que dans les termes *aussitôt que faire se pourra*, expression que laisse à la Cour de France la liberté de traîner l'évacuation des Etats de S. M. aussi longtems qu'elle le jugera nécessaire et jusqu'à que les troupes

autrichiennes soient à portée d'occuper ces places qu'elle abandonnera.

Enfin, S. M. a observé aussi avec étonnement que la déclaration par laquelle la Cour de France s'est reservée le payement des arrérages dûs à la Cour de Vienne sans spécifier cette somme, énerve en quelque manière la Clause qui se trouve à la fin de l'Article 13, et par laquelle les deux Puissances se sont engagées de ne fournir aucun secours dans aucun genre à leurs alliés d'Allemagne.

Tous ces articles étant directement contraires aux intérêts du Roi et aux conditions de l'alliance qui a subsisté si heureusement jusqu'ici entre elle et S. M. Britque, la restitution de ses états ayant été changée en une simple évacuation et celle-ci devenant même illusoire par les raisons qui ont engagé S. M. T. C. à y insister, par la facilité qu'elle a su se ménager pour favoriser son allié, S. M. ne sauroit envisager tout ce qui a été stipulé sur ce sujet que comme autant de contraventions à ses traités avec la Cour d'Angleterre, et elle pourroit se plaindre avec raison si les choses restoient sur ce pied, d'avoir été sacrifiée dans la guerre la plus glorieuse pour les armes de S. M. Britque et dans laquelle elle a rempli de son côté tous ses engagemens avec l'exactitude la plus scrupuleuse.

Le Roi se promet donc de l'amitié de S. M. Britque qu'en conséquence des traités que subsistent entre les deux Cours et par lesquels elle s'est chargée de la garantie de tous les états de S. M., elle aura soin de faire redresser dans le traité définitif les clauses préjudiciables qui se trouvent dans les Préliminaires, et qu'elle lui procurera non une simple évacuation, qui ne lui serait d'aucune utilité et qui rendrait même la situation plus fâcheuse qu'elle ne l'a été, mais la restitution immédiate de tous les états et forteresses de Westphalie, et elle le désire d'autant plus fortement qu'animée elle-même de l'amitié la plus sincère pour sa dite Majesté, elle seroit charmée de retrouver chez elle les mêmes sentiments et de pouvoir perpétuer ainsi cette heureuse intelligence que les intérêts communs, celui de la religion Protestante et le maintien de la liberté de l'Allemagne rendent si désirable pour les deux nations et pour l'Europe entière.

(*Signé*) Le B. de Knyphausen.
Michell.

A Londres ce 27e décembre 1762.

From the Earl of Halifax to Baron Knyphausen and M. Michel.

A St. James's ce 5e janvier 1763.

Messrs.—

Je n'ai pas manqué de présenter au Roi le Mémoire [1] que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me remettre le 27e du mois passé, quoiqu'à mon grand regret, comme ayant prévu qu'autant que S. M. se réjouiroit des déclarations de la bonne volonté du Roy votre maître, autant seroit-elle en droit de se plaindre des imputations sans fondement et des reproches non mérités qui accompagnent et qui énervent ces assurances.

En faisant examiner le contenu de cette pièce, et en le comparant avec celui du Mémoire de M. le Comte de Finckenstein du mois d'octobre, S. M. n'y a trouvé pour la plupart que des assertions et des insinuations rebattues, et auxquelles on a déjà répondu solidement par la *Réplique* du 26e du mois de novembre.

Il est évident que, dans le tems où l'on a fabriqué le présent Mémoire, on n'avoit encore reçu, de la part du ministre du Roi à Berlin, la dite *Réplique*. Sans cela S. M. veut bien croire qu'on se seroit abstenu de revenir à la charge, en lui attribuant, avec si peu de ménagement, d'avoir manqué aux procédés usités entre des Puissances alliées, aux devoirs de l'amitié et même à ses engagemens envers le Roi de Prusse.

Pour éviter, donc, les redites, selon que le Roi me l'a ordonné, je me toucherai que légèrement aux matières qui se trouvent déjà épuisées. Je ne m'entendrai que sur ce qu'il y a de nouveau dans le mémoire que j'ai reçu de vos mains.

C'est entre les premières qu'il faut ranger cette contravention aux traités et cet abandon de S. M. Pne dont on se plaint avec tant d'emphase. Comme, donc, la conduite du Roi à cet égard se trouve plainement justifiée par tant d'argumens irréfragables qui se trouvent dans la *Réplique* ci-dessus mentionnée, je n'y ajouterai que ce peu de mots, savoir : qu'il est inouï qu'un prince, au soutien duquel on a contribué de toutes les façons et au risque de sa propre ruine pendant cinq années de guerre et qu'on a finalement délivré du danger imminent de se voir écrasé par les restes formidables de cette ligue qu'on a formée contre lui, se représente après cela comme abandonné et sacrifié à cause de

[1] See p. 179.

quelque petite portion de ses vastes possessions qu'on ne lui a pas fait rendre. Croiroit-on que celui qui fait ce reproche sanglant à un allié auquel il a peut-être l'obligation d'avoir encore quelque-chose à défendre, n'ait contribué le moins du monde de son côté à la récupération qu'il demande de ses places? On ne prétend pas de la part de votre Cour que S. M. P^ne^ n'ait été avertie il y a plusieurs mois par cet allié qu'une évacuation toute pure des places en question étoit le tout qu'on seroit en état d'obtenir sur cet article, vu les engagemens de la France envers la Reine de Hongrie et la situation empirée des propres affaires de la Grande Bretagne. Il semble que le Roi de Prusse, qui a déclaré par son Conseiller Privé, le Comte de Finckenstein, dans une lettre écrite au S^r^ Mitchell le 14 juillet qu'il avait fait proposé au Ministre Plénipotentiaire de la Suède un article pour comprendre S. M. B^que^ dans la paix qu'il alloit conclure avec cette Couronne; mais que S. M. s'en étoit désisté par la seule crainte de s'attirer un refus et de risquer par là toute la négotiation, et cela sans avoir cru devoir seulement attendre une réponse de la Cour de Stockholm là-dessus; il semble, dis-je, que ce Prince ne seroit pas en droit, après cela, de reprocher au Roi d'avoir eu la même attention à ne pas risquer toute sa négotiation en s'obstinant à faire *restituer*, au lieu d'*évacuer*, les susdites places prussiennes lorsque S. M. étoit à traiter elle-même sa propre Paix avec le Roi T. C.

Au reste, le soupçon d'un concert entre les Cours de Londres et de Versailles, pour remettre les places susdites entre les mains de cette Princesse, préférablement à celles du Roi de Prusse, quoiqu'on se hazarde à avancer dans le Mémoire que les ministres françois s'en étoient clairement expliqués dans la négotiation qui a précédé les articles Préliminaires, est aussi mal fondé qu'injurieux à la bonne foy du Roi, qui a toujours entendu que par les stipulations de ces articles il seroit tout aussi libre à ce Prince de profiter de l'évacuation susmentionée qu'il le seroit à la Cour de Bruxelles. On se roidit pourtant à en vouloir persuader tout le contraire pour n'en avoir pas obligation au Roi. On ne veut rien accorder aux circonstances du tems. Il faut qu'à tout événement S. M. se charge de la restitution de ces places; que la guerre soit allumée de nouveau dans les quatre coins du monde; que les troupes françoises rentrent au cœur de l'Empire; que les autres alliés du Roi, que ses propres sujets même, soient

abîmés—cela n'est rien; il faut que toutes cède à la restitution immédiate de Wesel, de Clèves et de Gueldres.

Vous vous prévalez beaucoup, Messrs., dans le Mémoire que vous m'avez remis, d'une déclaration faite à la France dès le mois de juillet et communiquée d'abord à S. M. P^ne, portant que le Roi ne *pouvoit convenir de rien rélativement aux affaires d'Allemagne sans s'être préalablement concerté avec sa dite Majesté.* C'est la manière dont cette déclaration se trouve énoncée dans votre Mémoire. Les véritables expressions dont on s'est servi dans la pièce susdite sont celles qui suivent, viz.: au lieu de *convenir* etc. on y lit, *adopter les arrangemens de cette conséquence aux états du Roi de Prusse et à l'Empire en général, sans une communication et un concert préalables avec ce Prince etc.* Et dans un autre endroit on déclare qu'on ne peut concerter aucun arrangement sur Wesel et Gueldres sans le consentement et approbation de S. M. P^ne.

Or il faut remarquer, en premier lieu, ce qu'on a entendu par *les arrangemens de cette conséquence.* Et il saute d'abord aux yeux que ce ne pouvoient être autres que ceux que la France venoit de se proposer au Roi et qu'on y cite expressément, savoir: 'Que les dites forteresses prussiennes fussent gardées par les troupes de S. M. T. C. jusqu'à la pacification général,' et qu'après la signature des préliminaires une 'partie des armées respectives restât en Allemagne sous le titre d'armeés de pacification.' Voilà les arrangemens auxquelles S. M. s'est refusée sans un concert préaalble. 2^e. Il est bon de vous faire ressouvenir, Messrs., que dans la même déclaration où étoient insérées les assurances susdites, on a expressément proposé à la Cour de Versailles de retirer sans retour les armées soudoyées par les deux Couronnes qui étoient actuellement en Allemagne dès la signature des articles préliminaires: ce qui a compris nécessairement, et selon le sens où l'on s'en est toujours expliqué alors et depuis, l'évacuation des places en question par les troupes françoises. 3^e. Que par rapport aux affaires de l'Allemagne, dans le tems qu'on faisoit avec la plus scrupuleuse exactitude les communications susmentionées et d'autres de la même importance au Roi de Prusse, S. M. ne persistoit pas seulement à refuser à s'ouvrir le moins du monde sur ses propres intentions par rapport à la paix; mais qu'elle excluoit aussi expressément le Roi son allié de toute entremise dans ce qu'il pourroit avoir à traiter avec l'Impératrice Reine.

La Cour de Londres a démontré clairement dans le papier intitulé *Réplique* du 26e de novre qu'en faisant retirer les armées françoises de toute l'Allemagne et nommément des places prussiennes sur le bas Rhin, ensuite des Articles Préliminaires, elle satis faisait pleinement aux engagemens contractés par le Traité de 1756, pour autant que cela a regardé l'évacuation de l'Empire par les armeés étrangères, et qu'ayant pourvu par les mêmes articles à ce que la France n'assistât désormais son allié l'Impératrice Reine en *aucun* genre, elle avoit rendu le service plus essentiel au Roi de Prusse, le mettant ainsi en état de sortir, d'une manière honorable et conforme à ses propres déclarations, du reste de la guerre qu'il avoit eu à soutenir auparavant contre l'alliance redoutable des Rois T. C. et de Suède et de feue l'Impératrice des Russies, ligués et conjurés à sa perte avec la Cour de Vienne. Comment donc, et avec quelle apparence de verité peut-on dire dans ce Mémoire qu'on n'a fait la moindre attention à ses intérêts, et que le *seul avantage qui pouvoit revenir à S. M. Pne par cette paix étoit la restitution d'un pays qui lui appartenoit?*

Pour ce qui est des motifs qui peuvent avoir porté la Cour de Versailles à s'emparer de ces pays dès l'année 1757, il est si évidemment prouvé par la *Réplique* du 26e de novre que c'étoit pour se venger de l'invasion de la Saxe, faite par les troupes prussiennes quelques mois auparavant, et non, comme vous l'assurez, Messrs., dans votre Mémoire, en haine des engagemens pris avec S. M. en 1756 ou pour parvenir d'autant mieux à la conquête de l'Electorat de Hanovre, que je ne trouve aucunement nécessaire d'y répondre de nouveau.

Mais comme vous assurez dans votre Mémoire qui le traité de l'année 1756, en stipulant qu'on s'opposeroit à l'entrée des troupes étrangères en Allemagne, impliquoit nécessairement qu'on feroit restituer, en cas d'une paix future, les états que ces troupes étrangères auroient conquis sur l'une ou l'autre des deux parties contractantes, vous permettrez que je vous réponde là-dessus que l'engagement susdit a nécessairement impliqué, à la vérité, l'*évacuation* de telles conquêtes, au cas qu'il s'en fît, mais nullement la restitution.

Mais non content de mettre à la charge du Roi l'infraction de ce Traité de 1756, et des engagemens antérieurs qui y sont rappelés, charge de laquelle on croit s'être pleinement disculpé, le

Mémoire veut soutenir encore que le Roi ait manqué à l'Article Quatrième de la Convention de 1758, en conséquence duquel on ne devoit rien conclure de part ni d'autre *que de concert, et par un accord mutuel et en s'y comprenant nommément.*

Or voyons de quelle manière on soutient une accusation aussi grave que celle-là. En premier lieu, Messrs., vous faites dire à cet Article Quatrième ce qu'il ne dit pas. 2°. Vous assurez rondement l'existence d'un engagement qui n'existe plus. 3°. Vous voulez persuader que S. M. ait fait elle-même une chose qu'elle n'a jamais faite.

Quant au premier, il faut voir l'article même : on y trouvera qu'on ne doit conclure rien etc. *avec les Puissances qui ont pris part à la présente guerre etc.* Au lieu de cela, on met dans le Mémoire *avec les Puissances ennemies.* On aura vu dans la *Réplique* l'avantage que la Cour de Berlin a voulu tirer d'une substitution aussi hardie, et combien peu elle y a réussi. J'en pourrai dire encore un mot tantôt.

Sur le second chef, je ne craindrai pas, Messrs., de vous dire qu'il est inouï qu'un article perpétuel fasse part d'une convention qui ne doit durer qu'une année, à moins qu'on ne convienne expressément dans la convention même. Dans le cas présent, on ne l'a non seulement pas fait, mais le renouvellement même de ce traité en entier d'année en année prouve suffisamment que les hauts contractans ont cru que chaque article en avoit également besoin.

Et en troisième lieu, comme il est dit sur ce chapitre dans le mémoire que S. M. Brit^qu^ elle-même a fait valoir en plus d'une occasion *l'Alliance* entre les deux Cours, entendant par là ce même engagement à ne rien conclure que de concert etc. La réponse est qu'on se fait illusion là-dessus ; que, loin d'avoir fait valoir un tel engagement après l'expiration du dernier Traité de Subsides, S. M. s'est soigneusement abstenue d'en faire la moindre mention ou de se servir de raisons qu'elle auroit pu mettre en usage avec le plus grand avantage dans ce qu'on a eu à discuter depuis avec votre Cour, comme étant convaincue de leur insuffisance.

Je dirai plus que, quoique votre Cour prétende à présent que la susdite Article Quatrième soit encore en force, il n'y a que deux mois qu'elle s'en est expliqué tout autrement, M. Finckenstein n'ayant fait mention dans son mémoire du mois d'octobre de

cette convention qu'on veut maintenant rendre *perpétuelle* que pour la qualifier *d'annuelle*, et que pour se plaindre que le consentement que le Roi son maître avoit donné à ce qu'on ne la renouvelât plus, auroit préjudicié à ses intérêts, et cela quoique le subside eût être payé d'une autre manière. Or il est clair que ce préjudice aux intérêts du Roi de Prusse ne pouvoit résulter que de l'anéantissement de cet Article Quatrième, n'y ayant que cette seule omission supposé, le payement du subside, qui pût préjudicier à S. M. P^ne^.

Posons pourtant le cas pour un moment que cet article 4^me^, tant de fois cité, ait toujours subsisté. Est-ce le Roi seul qui aura été dans l'obligation de s'y conformer ? Sera-t-il permis au Roi votre maître de conclure tels traités qu'il lui plaira sans y comprendre S. M., sans aucun concert, sans un accord mutuel, et le Roi doit-il subir le reproche d'avoir contrevenu à cet article quoique S. M. ait effectivement communiqué à S. M. P^ne^ tout ce qui regarde ses intérêts dans la négociation des articles Préliminaires et qu'elle l'y ait même nommément comprise. Il semble que votre Cour ait assez mauvaise grace de se plaindre d'infidélité dans un tel cas. Dira-t-elle pour se justifier que la Russie et la Suède n'ont pas *pris part à la guerre?* Elle a trop bien senti ce qu'elle auroit perdu en se tenant aux expressions même de l'article en question. Donc elle y substitue le mot *ennemies*, selon qu'on a remarqué ci-dessus. C'étoit pour en pouvoir déduire ce beau raisonnement que la Russie et la Suède, n'étant pas *Ennemies* du Roi, et la France l'étant de S. M. P^ne^, elle pouvoit faire, par rapport aux deux premières Puissances, sans manquer à ses engagemens, ce que le Roi n'eut pu faire par rapport à la dernière sans contrevenir aux siens. Mais comme on a mis tout ce qui a rapport à cet argument dans son vrai jour, dans la *Réplique* au Mémoire de M. le Comte de Finckenstein, je ne pousserai pas plus loin les réflections sur cet endroit du vôtre, étant d'ailleurs superflu de travailler à la réfutation d'un raisonnement qui se réfute de lui-même, étant fondé sur une erreur de citation.

Vous poursuivez, Messrs., à vous plaindre au nom du Roi votre maître de ce que le 13^me^ Article des Préliminaires lui été communiqué sous deux formes ; que dans la première copie on s'est servi, par rapport à l'évacuation de ses places, du mot *d'abord* au lieu que dans la seconde on y a substitué *aussitôt que faire se*

pourra, qui laisse, à ce qu'on prétend, *la liberté à la Cour de France de traîner cette évacuation etc.* Et en dernier lieu, que la déclaration qui a rapport aux arrérages des subsides dûs par la France à l'Impératrice Reine, énervoit en quelque manière la stipulation de ne pas secourir les alliés respectives *dans aucun genre.*

Pour répondre à ces nouveaux griefs, il faut observer, premièrement, qu'entre les deux communications dont on fait mention, il n'y avoit qu'un intervalle de trois jours, c'est-à-dire, du 9e au 12e novre; que l'erreur dans la première, ne provenant que de ce qu'on avoit copié par mégarde le 13me Art. d'après un *projet* au lieu de *l'original*, était due au seul empressement de faire part au Roi de Prusse, aussitôt que possible, de ce qu'on avoit stipulé par rapport à ses places; que si l'expression *aussitôt que faire se pourra* ne revient pas à votre Cour, il n'y a qu'à regarder l'Art. 22 où l'on trouvera que l'évacuation doit se faire *d'abord*; mais qu'au fond comme on ne peut pas faire une chose plutôt qu'on ne le peut faire, la différence entre ces deux façons de parler, pour peu qu'on eût voulu supposer de la bonne foy à un prince tel que le Roi T. C., ne valoit pas la peine d'être relevée.

Je fais le même remarque sur ce que le Mémoire insinue touchant la déclaration de S. M. T. C., par laquelle elle se réserve de payer les arrérages de subsides dûs à l'Impératrice Reine. Falloit-il soupçonner dans le moment même de la réconciliation et en signant les Articles de son accommodement avec ce Prince respectable, qu'il cherchoit des alors échappatoire pour pouvoir contrevenir aux engagemens solennels qu'il venoit de contracter? C'en est fait, en effet, de tout commerce entre les souverains, s'il est vrai qu'ils doivent se croire capables l'un l'autre de perfidies aussi noires et honteuses.

Pour conclusion, le Roi me charge de vous dire, Messrs., qu'il est tems, à son avis, de mettre fin à toutes ces discussions odieuses, et qui ne font naître que de l'aigreur et de la mésintelligence entre deux Cours qui se doivent réciproquement, à tant de titres, une confiance et amitié sincère. S. M. croit y avoir toujours satisfait de son côté, et vous êtes vous-mêmes en état de rendre témoignage véritable aux nouvelles preuves qu'elle vient d'en donner à S. M. Pne par rapport à la neutralité des Princes de l'Empire, que ce Prince semble avoir tant à cœur.

Mr. Wroughton to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

January 5, 1763.

My Lord,—

I heard with infinite pleasure the nomination of your Lordship for the Court of Russia, and with the same joy of your safe and expeditious arrival at St. Petersburg. The opportunities you have of admiring one of the greatest and most accomplished Princesses upon earth will, I make no doubt, have fully compensated for the fatigues your Excellency suffered during so long a journey; and I hope the success of your mission will be equal to what is universally expected from your Lordship's well-known abilities.

As the Court of Russia seemed inclined to take so great a share in the transactions of this country, I could no longer refrain my impatience of commencing this correspondence, it being for the King our master's interest that we should be mutually acquainted with what is passing at each place. I must carry you back as far as the last Diet, which was broke the second day by the great animosity which broke out between the family of Czartoryski, and the Prime Minister, Count Brühl;[1] the family declaring that they could not proceed to the election of a Mareschal whilst the son of the Minister was sitting in the House as Nonce, being against the fundamental laws of the country, as they were neither born nor naturalised Polanders.

There had like to have been much bloodshed on this occasion, as many sabres were drawn in the Chamber of Nonces, an unparallel'd example! Each party throws the blame on each other, therefore I shall not take upon me to determine which was the first aggressor. But this quarrel has thrown the nation into a great fermentation, many of the nobility being discontented with the Court for the manner in which they have distributed the vacant charges, and for other parts of their conduct, and many on the other hand being jealous of the views of the Czartoryskis[2] and attached to the Court by favours received or expected. All these circumstances your Excellency will doubtless have been long acquainted with, as they have been public in all the Gazettes, therefore I am as brief as possible upon the subject; but our business now is to look forward, and there I confess myself lost in the contemplation of what may be the consequence of all this

[1] First Minister of Augustus III. of Saxony and Poland. [2] See page 75, note.

confusion. The Empress of Russia has given the strongest orders to her Ambassador, Count Kayzerling, to protect the family to the utmost of his power, and that minister lives with them with the greatest confidence and cordiality, which on the one hand gives them credit, and on the other makes many of the natives jealous by this seeking the protection of a Power from whom they pretend to have received so many injuries.

The affair of Courland[1] is a real affliction to the King, whose many misfortunes render him an object of pity. We have lately received an account of the minister of Russia, M. de Simolin, having sequestered all the ducal revenues; and to oblige his Royal Highness to quit the place he has placed guards on every means of his subsistence except a well of water: but the King has expressly ordered him to remain until the very last extremity, so that we wait with impatience to see the issue of this contest, which in my opinion must be disgracious for the Prince, who thus without reason exposes his person to an insult. The Court has promised me a relation of this affair, and the Count Kayzerling also an *exposé*—as I suppose, in justification of his Court. If either one or the other comes to my hands before his Excellency sends for my letter, your Lordship shall find it inclosed; if not, I shall not fail to send them by the first occasion. It is certain that the nation in general is touched with this affair of Courland, and was their power equal to their resentment they would endeavour to recover that fief out of the hands of their neighbours; but on so miserable a footing is their Government, that they must be contented to see themselves treated by their respective

[1] Courland was a fief of Poland, but had long been under Russian influence. Peter I. had not been able to conquer it, but he had prepared the way for its union with Russia by the marriage of his niece Anna Ivanowna with its Duke. When Anna became Czarina she procured from Augustus III. of Poland the investiture of the Duchy for her favourite, Biren, and when Biren was exiled the King of Poland obtained permission from Elizabeth to appoint his own son, Charles Christian, as Duke of Courland and Sémigalle. Biren, however, was recalled from exile by Peter III., and Catherine designed to reinstate him in Courland as a part of the policy by which she had determined to rid Poland of the rule of the House of Saxony. The election of its Duke rested nominally with the States of Courland, subject to a *congé d'élire* from the Diet of Poland; and Catherine, claiming that Ernest John de Biren was in truth the legally elected Duke, was now proceeding to eject Charles of Saxony. See St. Priest, *Etudes Diplomatiques*, p. 65. Rambaud, *Histoire de Russie*, pp. 404, 459 See also p. 12 of this work.

neighbours as they please, and thank God it is no worse. The Prussians, on the other side, have sent a detachment of Hussars into Great Poland, demanding a large quantity of grain for their garrisons and magazines in Silesia, which they pay for, according to the best assurances I receive, with the worst money.

[*Cipher*] I am much afraid that our friends, the family of Czartoryski, have engaged themselves in an undertaking which will be very expensive and not attended with the success they flatter themselves. As far as I can penetrate their views, they intend to form a confederacy, with the assistance of Russia, to give a change and consistency to the Government; but is the Empress of Russia so much their friend as to sacrifice the interest of the Empire to rely upon a neighbouring Power which may in time be so dangerous? I think I know her too well. Is it her view to put one of the family on the throne in case of the death of the present King? This seems to be the most likely method of (increasing) the jealousies and consequently maintaining the weakness of the nation, but I think that the family have not such thoughts, and the King is as likely to live as the Empress, age apart. How far her Imperial Majesty intends to assist them or what are her intentions I wish your Lordship could penetrate and acquaint me. (*End of cipher.*)

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: January 6, 1763.

My Lord,—

Every kind of business is put off until after the holidays, so that I have very little to trouble your Lordship with. . . .

It gives me some concern to hear, from what I think good authority, that Panin is inclining to the French interest. Bestucheff has again been ill; he sends me word that I may depend upon his assistance, and that I shall find the effects of it after the holidays.

The Tartars have made some incursions into the borders, but I don't hear that any Turks were with them, or that they consider it here as a matter of any great consequence.

The Great Duke was at chapel yesterday, and the Empress assures me that I shall very soon have an audience of him. She also mentioned to me that she had appointed him High Admiral

in the room of Prince Galitzin,[1] who has resigned upon account of his great age.

Note à communiquer verbalement à M. le Comte de Bouckingham, Ambassadeur de S. M. le Roi de la Grande-Bretagne.

Sa Majesté l'Impératrice, en recevant la communication que S. M. Britannique lui a fait faire confidemment des explications désagréables où les deux Cours de Londres et de Berlin en sont venues entre elles, comme une marque de l'amitié sincère du Roi, a ordonné d'abord à son ministère d'en témoigner sa satisfaction à S. E. M. l'ambassadeur et de l'assurer que dans toutes les occasions qui pourraient se présenter il en sera agi, de la part de cette Cour Impériale vis-à-vis de celle de la Grande-Bretagne, avec la même ouverture et une confiance réciproque.

L'Impératrice n'ayant pu voir sans surprise par la susdite communication combien le Roi de Prusse se montre peu reconnaissant envers Sa Majesté Britannique, et étant d'ailleurs persuadée de la parfaite conformité d'intérêts qui se trouve entre les deux Couronnes de Russie et de la Grande-Bretagne, est très intentionnée d'entrer à tout ce qui pourrait servir à accélérer le rétablissement désiré de la paix. Au reste, les dispositions fermes et invariables, dans lesquelles Sa Majesté se trouve, sont de répondre en toute occasion à l'amitié du Roi et de travailler à resserrer leur union pour l'avantage réciproque des deux nations.

Le Ministère, en se faisant un plaisir d'avoir à informer M. l'ambassadeur de ces sentiments si pleins d'amitié de la part de l'Impératrice, n'a pas voulu de son côté laisser sans remarque la mention qui est faite de certaines dépêches dans le Mémoire du Comte de Finckenstein. On a sans doute voulu parler de quelques relations de M. le Prince de Galitzin, aujourd'hui Vice-Chancelier, lors de son ministère à la Cour de Londres, dans lesquelles il a fait rapport des entretiens qu'il a eus avec le secrétaire d'état Britannique pour le Nord,[2] sur l'état des affaires, après la mort de feue l'Impératrice Elisabeth, de glorieuse et immortelle mémoire. Or il est constant qu'il n'y a point du tout de telles pièces dans les mains des Prussiens (comme il est nommément dit dans le dit mémoire), mais que toutes les relations de ce ministre sont ici en entier et en

[1] To be distinguished from Prince Alexander Galitzin, the Vice-Chancellor.

[2] Lord Bute held this office from March 1761 til May 1762, when he became First Lord of the Treasury.

original; et on peut assurer avec certitude qu'il s'en faut beaucoup qu'elles soient dans de tels termes qu'on les donne de la part du ministère de Berlin. D'un autre côte, il se peut aisément que le cy-devant Empereur, par une suite de sa partialité excessive pour le Roi de Prusse, ait interprété les expressions les plus innocentes comme préjudiciables aux intérêts de ce souverain, et qu'au moyen d'une traduction fautive il lui ait fait une fausse communication du prétendu contenu des dépêches en question.

A Moscou, ce 28 décembre 1762. (*Endorsed*: Pro memoria, reçu du Chancelier et Vice-Chancelier le 8 janv. [N.S.] 1763.)[1]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Marshal Münnich.

January 8 (O.S.), 1763.

J'ai reçu la lettre de votre Excellence avec la satisfaction que me donnent toujours les marques de son estime et de son bienveillance, et comme je me fais un vrai plaisir, en tout ce qui dépend de moi, d'obéir à ses ordres, je tâcherai de justifier la conduite de ma cour vis-à-vis du Roi de Prusse. Je me flatte même que votre Excellence trouvera que le tort n'est nullement du côté de l'Angleterre.

V. E., en parlant du traité si souvent renouvelé, se rapporte naturellement au convention de 1758, par laquelle l'Angleterre s'engagea de payer un subside de 4,000,000 d'écus d'Allemagne à Sa Majesté Prussienne, et les deux rois se promettent mutuellement de ne conclure aucun traité de paix, de trêve ou de neutralité avec les puissances qui ont pris part dans la présente guerre que de concert et en s'y comprenant nommément. Le renouvellement de ce traité chaque année marque suffisamment qu' on ne l'entende que comme une convention annuelle; mais supposé que cela ne fut pas, le Roi de Prusse, en faisant sa paix avec la Russie et la Suède sans consulter l'Angleterre, avait déjà rompu une stipulation principale. Il est vrai que les ministres de S. M. P. ont tâché de gloser là-dessus, mais on n'a qu'à comparer les dates des informations reçues à Londres avec les temps de la signature de ces traités pour s'appercevoir facilement de la futilité de cette justification. Au commencement de l'année passée, quand la Cour d'Angleterre était encore d'intention de continuer le subside, on recommande de la part de S. M. B. au Roi de Prusse de tâcher d'entamer quelque négociation pour la paix avec la Cour de Vienne, le priant en même

[1] Forwarded to England in Lord Buckinghamshire's despatch of Jan. 19, 1763.

temps de confier à S. M. B. les termes sur lesquels il voudrait traiter et l'assurant de sa disposition de faire son possible pour perfectionner un dessein si salutaire. On demande de plus une communication de ces ressources sur lesquelles il compte s'appuyer pour soutenir la guerre si telle était son intention après tant de malheurs et une diminution si sensible de ses forces. Après une attente des plus longues la réponse de S. M. P. n'est revenue qu'à ceci : '*Je suis résolu à faire la guerre jusqu'à ce que je pourrai obtenir une paix convenable à mes intérêts et à ma gloire.*'

Oserai-je demander à V. E. s'il lui semble que cette réponse a été dictée par la confiance, l'amitié et la cordialité? Cependant S. M. B^que^ déclara que si le Roi de Prusse voudrait l'assurer qu'il employerait le subside pour faciliter l'ouvrage de la paix S. M. se tiendrait prêt pour en faire la demande à son Parlement. Ce ne fut qu'après que le Roi de Prusse avait effectivement fait la paix avec la Russie et la Suède dans le temps que nous avions dans l'Espagne un puissant ennemi de plus à combattre et que le Roi de Prusse, en Pierre III, avait fait l'acquisition d'un puissant ami, que S. M. P. n'avait plus la Poméranie et le Brandenbourg à défendre, et que de notre côté nous nous trouvions obligés de pourvoir à la défense de Portugal, qu'on prépara à ce prince de s'attendre à une cessation totale de ces aides pécuniaires. L'Angleterre enfin a fait sa paix, ne laissant au Roi de Prusse qu'un ennemi affaibli à combattre, obligeant les troupes françaises d'évacuer l'Allemagne et remplissant tous ses engagements envers un prince qui n'a rien fait pour elle. Comme j'aime mieux envoyer cette lettre par mon courier que par la poste, je l'ai écrite à la hâte et nécessairement avec très peu de précision. V. E. aura la bonté de l'excuser. J'ai l'honneur, etc.,

BUCKINGHAM.

Mr. Wroughton[1] *to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.*

Warsaw : January 8, 1763.

My Lord,—

I had the honour of writing to your Lordship the 5th inst. by a courier whom Count Kayserling dispatched to his Court; I inclosed to you an *exposé* which that ambassador has sent to each Senator of the Republic, which in my opinion is the best wrote of any that has appeared upon the subject, and unanswerable.

[1] English Envoy Resident at Warsaw. See p. 55.

But, however, the Court is employing a person to refute it, which, when it appears, I shall not fail to convey to your Lordship. In the meantime the King has nominated a gentleman to go immediately to Mosco to represent to the Empress the injustice of her interfering with this fief of the Republic,[1] and to endeavour to prevail on her to desist from the protection she gives to Biren. The gentleman destined is my friend and neighbour Mons^r de Borck, Chambellan of Livonia, a very honest man and a good Englishman; but I believe he has engaged himself in a commission very disagreeable and unprofitable, for can he have any hopes of succeeding? He undertakes this journey entirely on his own expense, the Court not being in a condition to make him any other amends than ample promises of future recompenses, which I wish for his sake may be realized. I take the liberty of recommending this gentleman to your Excellency's civilities, I mean as to his private capacity; tho' indeed he cannot take a public character, the King having no power to invest him with one without the consent of the three Estates in a Diet. He will probably soon be with you, as he sets out to-day or to-morrow.

The King goes to-morrow for a few days on a party of hunting, to the estates of a Princess Lubomirska; the gentleman of the Bed-Chamber who is sent here to notify the Empress's accession to the throne had his audience yesterday.

[*Cypher.*] We have here daily reports of the instances of the debility of your Government and the little probability there is of the Empress of Russia keeping the reins long. These reports are spread with so much industry that it must be by people very ill-intentioned to her prosperity. Tho' hard to accuse any, but as Courts seem to have more interest to wish it than anybody, the suspicion naturally falls upon them. Besides the interest I take as an Englishman, I am so sincerely concerned personally for her welfare that I should be very glad to be favoured with your Lordship's sentiments on this subject, and you may depend on my discretion.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

My Lord,— Moscow: January 10, 1763.

I had this morning my audience of the Great Duke.[2] I made my compliment to him in French, which he answered in the same

[1] Courland. [2] Paul, afterwards Czar (1796), b. Sept. 20 (N.S.), 1754.

language. It gave me pleasure to see he was so well recovered. His address and manner are agreeable and engaging, and his deportment is very extraordinary, considering how very young he is.

From 'Russian Memoranda.'

The features of the Grand Duke are neither regular nor beautiful, but the air of his countenance is remarkably intelligent. His figure is genteel, and for his age he dances gracefully. From the ill-judged care of the Empress Elizabeth, during whose life he was never suffered to breathe the open air, his constitution is very delicate, but he gains strength daily. His apprehension is lively and his memory strong, but he is not steady in his application to his studies. He is, however, a better scholar than princes usually are at his age; and, as little indulgence is shown him by his mother, and his instructors are able and diligent, he may make a considerable proficiency. Count Orlow, who pays great court to the Prince, too frequently interrupts him. He is said to have a great deal of the air and something of the disposition of the late Emperor, particularly that he is remarkably fearful.

Mr. Wroughton to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Warsaw: January 12, 1763.

The Ministry here have sent an answer to Count Kayserling in his *exposé* relating to the affairs of Courland. I wish it had been in my power to have sent you a copy of it; but the Ambassador answers me that it is impossible to make it public until the Court has determined on the measures they will take on so extraordinary a writing. Indeed it is wrote with all the insolence, warmth, rancour, and offensive expressions as if they had an army on the frontier, ready to fall upon the Empire of Russia, and cannot fail of producing a very disagreeable effect at the place where your Lordship resides. I think proper to inform you of it, that you might endeavour to procure it from the Chancellor, and I am sure a copy would be very interesting to our Court. I cannot comprehend the motives on which our gentry act here, for they could not have taken a step more advantageous to their enemies, in my opinion.

There are a body of about 500 Prussians arrived at Thorn to

take possession of the magazines which the Russians have there and in other places in Poland, and which they have sold to the King of Prussia. The arrival, however, of this small corps did not fail to put us into a kind of consternation, for I don't know how it comes, but we are terribly afraid of an *enlèvement*, and our fears augmented this small detachment to a considerable army.

According to yesterday's advices from Saxony there are hopes of this winter's putting an end to the war; the two principal belligerent Powers seem to be in earnest, and doubtless our Court as well as France are too much interested not to use their utmost endeavours to restore once more a general tranquillity to Europe.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Earl of Halifax.

Moscow: January 13, 1763.

My Lord,—

I take the opportunity of a French courier that M. Breteuil despatches this morning to trouble your Lordship with a few lines. Yesterday being New Year's Day (old style) H. I. M. and the Great Duke dined in public under the State, and were attended by all the great officers. The ambassadors and other foreign ministers remained till her Majesty drank, which was the signal for the several orders of nobility to sit down at tables prepared for them at the other end of the saloon, and consequently for us to retire. At night there was a ball, which was opened by her Imperial Majesty and the Great Duke. She afterwards danced with Count Mercy and myself. The evening concluded with a magnificent firework. The Prussian minister took an opportunity yesterday, as I was carrying him in my coach from dinner at the Great Chancellor's to Court, to attack me without the least introduction upon the conduct of the Court of England to his Master. He was pleased to say that the English were not contented with forsaking him, but were trying to prejudice his interests here. His manner of expressing himself is never very agreeable, and upon this occasion was less so than usual, so that to avoid improper warmth I cut the conversation short by telling him that England had no reason to be pleased with the King of Prussia's behaviour, but that it was a subject we had better not enter upon. I was sorry to decline a discussion in which the advantage of the argument is so clearly on the side of England, but from the style in which it

began it would have been impossible to have carried it on with temper. The Imperial Minister continues to behave with the same reserve to this Court.

Mr. Wroughton to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Warsaw: January 15, 1763.

My Lord,—

I had the honour of writing to your Lordship by the last post, since which we have nothing very material here, except the expectation of the arrival of Prince Charles from Mittaw, to whom it has been insinuated by M. de Simolin, by order of the Empress, that he would do well to absent himself with a good grace, as by that means he might induce her to interest herself in his behalf to procure him some other establishment. However it is whispered that he intends to take another house and remain there, except forced away; but I am unwilling to believe him capable of a conduct so little promising of utility. The Duke Biren was expected there the 10th of this month.[1]

The very extraordinary Memorial which I mentioned to your Excellency in my last seems to have put a stop to the journey of my friend, M. de Borck, and I congratulate him upon it, for in all cases it was an errand that would have been attended with expense and no success; and that Memorial, which seems to be wrote with the manifest intention of quarrelling with the Court of Russia, and in terms the most shocking and indecent, would probably have made his reception so much the worse.

If the King disowns his Ministers on this occasion, which I should not be surprized at, a party of Cossacks may probably arrive here for the persons of the four gentlemen who have signed it; I cannot otherwise convey to you the idea I conceived of it from the once reading which was allowed me by the Ambassador.

The Earl of Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

St. James's: January 19, 1763.

My Lord,—

I had only time, when I wrote last, to acknowledge your Excellency's dispatches of the 6th, 9th, and 13th of Decr. I have now the King's commands to acquaint you that, upon reading

[1] See p. 191.

the note which you wrote to M. Bestucheff,[1] his Majesty expressed some surprize that, when it must appear to you, from your instructions, that the King would wish to find the Court of Russia in a disposition to renew the Defensive Alliance of 1742 with the Empress, your Lordship should, upon pretence of her Imperial Majesty's having deferred entering into negotiation thereupon when you first sounded her ministers concerning it, yourself decline accepting the offer of such a renewal, when it was so authentically made to you; and that you did not so much as give any hopes to M. Bestucheff of applying for his Majesty's orders.

This gives the greater disappointment, as, by the vast distance between the two Courts, so much time must be necessarily lost before the King's intentions upon that head can be represented in their true light to the Empress, besides the danger of her turning her thoughts another way upon meeting with such a repulse. But in order to retrieve the affair, if not too late, it is his Majesty's pleasure that you should take the first opportunity, after the receipt of this, to inform M. Bestucheff of the King's sincere inclination and desire to enter into immediate alliance with the Empress, and to renew, for that purpose, the defensive engagements of the Treaty of 1742, which expired in 1759; and as the alterations which have happened in publick affairs in a course of twenty years may make some few changes appear necessary, either in the body of that treaty or in the separate articles belonging thereto, your Excellency will desire that M. Bestucheff will enable you to transmit to his Majesty the exact plan upon which the Empress would agree to settle that affair, and offer to dispatch a messenger to me directly, with his project of such a renewal.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Earl of Halifax.

Moscow: January 19, 1763.]

My Lord,—

It is a particular pleasure to me that his Majesty approves of my behaviour to the Imperial minister in the first instance. I must also flatter myself that he will not be displeased at it in the second (mentioned in my despatch of November 25); as after

[1] See pp. 106 and 107.

that explanation between Count Mercy and my brother any other conduct must have carried the air of that affected distance which his Majesty forbids. If any overtures should be made to me either from Count Mercy or the Court, I shall be careful to obey the instructions your Lordship mentions, but I do not think at this moment, whatever appearance there was of it a few weeks ago, either of those suppositions, and particularly the latter, likely to happen, as the Empress, however sincerely she may wish to contribute to the establishing of peace in Germany, is under difficulties how to act, and is as much disgusted with the reserve of the House of Austria as with the answer her minister received from the King of Prussia.[1] The Vice-Chancellor, the declared friend of the Empress Queen, has repeatedly complained to me of the haughtiness of that behaviour, which discouraged and offended those Powers who wished to exert their interposition and good offices for her preservation. As she seems determined to maintain the same impracticable conduct, and the King of Prussia is too much flushed with his late successes to give way in any respect, everything seems to promise another campaign, and surely there is the greatest probability that that campaign must end fatally for the House of Austria. An article which was inserted some time ago in one of the English evening papers, supposed to be extracted from an intercepted letter of the King of Prussia to Count Finckenstein,[2] comparing Peter III. to the Greek Emperor Zeno, and her Imperial Majesty to his wife, Ariadne, and Mary of Medicis, has given great offence here. He has since very injudiciously taken pains to disculpate himself, which has only confirmed them in the opinion that he was the author of it. Her

[1] See p. 123.

[2] The supposed letter was as follows: 'Voilà le pauvre Empereur de Russie détrôné par son épouse. On s'y attendait. L'Impératrice a infiniment d'esprit, aucune religion et les inclinations de la défunte (Impératrice), mais elle contrefait la dévote en même temps. C'est le second tome de Zéno, empereur grec, de son épouse, Ariadne, et de la Catherine de Médicis. Le ci-devant chancelier Bestusheff était le grand favori de cette princesse, et, comme il était entièrement attaché aux guinées, je me flatte que les attachements d'à présent subsisteront. Le pauvre Empereur voulait imiter Pierre I, mais il n'en avait pas le génie.' This 'gross imposture,' as Frederic calls it, had been invented, he writes to Finckenstein, by his enemies in England in order to embroil him with Russia! December 8, 1762; see vol. xxii. of the *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des Grossen*, p. 378.

Imperial Majesty is in every respect greatly disgusted with that prince, and highly disapproves of that most ungenerous return which he has made to the friendship of England. The Prussian minister here takes every opportunity of arraigning the late preliminaries, and holds a language thoroughly consistent with that spirit which dictated his sovereign's memorial, but it is with the greatest pleasure that I observe the very slight impression made by his eloquence. Yet, whatever the private thoughts and future views of this Court may be, it is by no means their present intention to break with the King of Prussia. They are fearful that such a step might force him immediately into a connection with France, and hereafter give an additional weight to the influence of that nation in the affairs of Poland. The same reason will determine them for the present not to propose that triple alliance of England, Russia, and Austria which I am persuaded is the darling political object of this Government. As in the present situation of affairs it might be of use to me to have early information of the disposition and of the views of the King of Prussia, I would with the greatest humility submit to his Majesty how far he might think it expedient for Mr. Mitchell to be directed to give me from time to time such intelligence as may in some measure guide my conduct here, more especially as after the late explanation the situation of the Courts of London and Berlin with respect to each other must be rather critical. . . . I have complained of the Prussian minister's recent behaviour to the Vice-Chancellor, who was greatly offended at it, and assured me that though Solms has taxed him and the Chancellor with it, they had never owned that the memorials had been communicated to them. I have excused myself since from dining at his house, but could not avoid including him in a general invitation with all the other foreign ministers for Friday next, and find he intends coming. I rather believe his behaviour was owing to ignorance and want of politeness than any intention to offend, but thought it proper to mention it.

I am assured from very good authority that the Empress and those she most confides in are determined to cultivate the friendship of England in preference to that of every other country, that our Treaty of Commerce will be entered upon as soon as the Carnival is over, and that the French propositions will not be in the least attended to.

The Great Chancellor desires me to lay him at his Majesty's feet, and to assure him how sensible he is of his royal goodness in the gracious manner in which he hears he has spoke of him, as well as for the reception which has been given to his nephew. He gave me some papers on Sunday evening, which he told me were accounts of losses sustained by the Russians from English privateers, and added that he himself had been a considerable sufferer in relation to several things of value which were coming to him from France; that, however, he did not mention it as a demand, but desired to submit it to his Majesty's goodness. He also hinted that he was considerably in debt, and that his health was such as disabled him from going through the fatigues of business. I told him I would acquaint his Majesty with what he mentioned. Upon looking over the papers I find his demand is not much more than fifteen hundred, though he stated it to me as two thousand pounds. If it should be agreeable to his Majesty to order the payment I am satisfied, from the manner in which he spoke of it, that it will be considered as a very great obligation. Count Orlow, the officer who fetched the Empress from Petershoff the morning of the Revolution, seems her first favourite. It is thought he does not interfere in public business, but H.I.M. seems to take particular pleasure in every mark of attention that is paid him. I will not pretend to decide if it is gratitude or inclination which determines this preference, but it is evident that she wishes to see him distinguished. If the Treaty of Commerce is concluded upon terms agreeable to his Majesty, I should rather think it advisable that presents should be made to him, to Bestucheff, Panin, and the Vice-Chancellor. Your Lordship will be so good as to acquaint me with his Majesty's pleasure upon that head. I must add that possibly an expense of this kind is not absolutely necessary, though they have been but too much used to presents here.

I have just received information that the Courts of Vienna, Berlin, and Dresden have appointed ministers to meet and treat of their several interests. It would be improper for me to mention the particulars of an event the news of which must long before this have reached England. The moment after I had heard it the servants told me the Imperial minister was at the door. Though I was busy I ordered him to be let in, in hopes he might for once have been communicative, but he did not say a

word upon the subject, so that if I had not heard that he had received an estafette this morning I should almost have imagined that he was not acquainted with an event of such particular importance to his Court.

From 'Russian Memoranda.'

There are five brothers of the Orlows,[1] but the eldest declines taking a distinguished part, and the youngest, not more than nineteen years of age, is abroad. Gregory, the eldest of the remaining three, is the favourite of his Sovereign, and, as far as her distinction can make him, the first man in the Russian Empire. The wish of her heart is to see him great, that the approbation of the public may justify her private partiality. He had no advantages of education, but, allowing for that, does not make a bad appearance in conversation upon common topics. By what has occasionally fallen from him in private conversations with me he thinks arts and sciences and the finer manufactures prejudicial in a great and powerful country, as they enervate the minds and bodies of the individuals, but would only encourage agriculture and the cultivation of commodities to be exported unmanufactured. He likes the English, as he esteems them a frank and brave nation, more particularly from the accounts he has received of Mr. Broughton's amphitheatre, the amusements of which square exceedingly with the taste of his family. He at one time proposed to make arrangements for a boxing match at Moscow, at which the Empress intended being present, until informed how serious a diversion an Englishman made it.

The Empress at the beginning of his credit said she herself would form and instruct him. She so far succeeded as to teach him to think and to reason, but not to think justly or to reason right, as he has only obtained that sort of light which dazzles but will not guide. It is more than probable that she now wishes she had left him just what she found him, and at that time judged sufficient to justify her preference. He has lately awkwardly affected an air of stiffness and surliness, qualities by no means of his natural character. He neglects his person, smokes, hunts frequently, and is not so unobservant of the beauties he meets with as policy makes necessary and gratitude should enforce. It

[1] See p. 61, note 1.

is asserted, but falsely, that the object to whom his whole attention should be dedicated is unmindful of transitory infidelities. One of those women who, without being handsome, are liked for their youth and we know not what, had for some time been distinguished by the Count, and yet was frequently admitted to be of the private parties into the country. As that lady came constantly to my house, and she called herself my friend, I joked with her upon the subject. She answered me that I could not be ignorant that her passion for another man as well as her prudence must incline her to discourage Orlow, which she had ever done with what propriety she could; that lately in the country, upon the Empress coming into the room where he was attempting to romp with her, she was a little confused, upon which the Empress came behind her and leaning upon her shoulder whispered: 'Don't be embarrassed; I am convinced of your discretion and your regard for me. You need not fear making me uneasy; on the contrary, I think myself obliged to you for your conduct.'

Count Orlow is one of the Empress's three adjutants-general. When in waiting they command all the troops in the neighbourhood. He is Captain of the Corps of *Chevaliers Gardes*, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Horse Guards, at the head of the Commission for settling the affairs of the Colonists, Knight of all the Orders, and Chamberlain.

The day of (the anniversary) of her accession the Empress mentioned to me that she had been considering the evening before in which of his employments Count Orlow should appear upon that festival, and had decided that acting as her adjutant would distinguish him the most, from its giving him the command of the whole.

Alexis, the next brother, is a giant in strength and figure (the least of these three brothers is six feet high). He speaks German, but no French, and, perhaps from feeling himself of less importance, is more sociable and of easier access than the elder. Opinions are divided which of the two has the superiority in understanding, but it is disputing about trifles; both must be considered as young officers educated in the circle of Covent Garden, at coffee houses, taverns, and billiard tables. Brave to excess, they were ever esteemed rather enduring than quarrelsome. In their unexpected exaltation they have not been unmindful of their ancient connections, and upon the whole are possessed of a great share of that

good humour without principle which disposes to do little services to others at no expense of trouble, and though they are capable of the most desperate undertakings, when a capital point is to be carried, they will by no means do mischief for mischief's sake. They are not in the least vindictive or prone to do ill offices to those even whom they suspect with reason of being their enemies. All the time of General Chernichow's disgrace they were the warmest solicitors for him, though they could not doubt of the ill-will he bore them. Yet the man who was to attempt to gain the Empress's affection would run great risk unless he proceeded with the most particular circumspection; he must take care that the moment that marks his success must be that of their disgrace to such an extent as will put it out of their power to hurt him. A young man of fashion, whose person and address spoke greatly in his favour, not long ago was particularly noticed by her Imperial Majesty. Some of M. Panin's friends, who were also his, encouraged him to push his point. At first he attended to the advice, but soon after neglected the brilliant fortune which seemed to offer itself. It was not unnatural to imagine that at his disinterested time of life, when love and present enjoyment seem everything, his attachment to a lady with whom he lived in intimate connection had occasioned this inconsistency in his behaviour; but at last he owned in confidence to a near relation that he feared the threats the Orlows threw out against any person who should pretend to supplant their brother, and had not ambition sufficient to venture his life in the attempt.

Feodor, the youngest of those in Russia, is the pride and ornament of the family. If a travelled lady was to describe his figure she would tell you that he had the features of the Apollo in the Belvedere with the strength and muscles of the Hercules Farnese. His address is easy and his manner engaging. At present, from his expressing himself with difficulty in French, he can converse little with foreigners. The Empress has placed him in an office of business, and he is said to be diligent and intelligent. As when the personal merit and services of his brothers established their consequence, he was still young enough to learn something, he may in time qualify himself for the highest employments, and hereafter support the decline of those whose fortunate beginnings raised him.

Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

My Lord,— Moscow: January 20, 1763.

I communicated this morning to the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor the inclosures, which were brought me last night by the messenger Ardouin.[1] It appeared to me, both by his behaviour and language, that the Chancellor was persuaded in his own mind that the sentiments of the Empress would coincide with those of his Majesty. The Vice-Chancellor, as I rather suspected, thought the interests of the Court of Vienna were not sufficiently attended to. They promise me an answer in a few days. I have received a letter this morning from Mr. Wroughton, by which it is evident, as far as we can make out the cypher, that he is no longer in the confidence of the Czartoryski family. He seems to wish to have lights from me in relation to the disposition of her Imperial Majesty, which are of too delicate a nature for me to send without very particular instructions, especially if my supposition is well founded of his being no longer in connection with that family. I could have wished, when the ministers talked to me upon the affairs of Poland, they would have more confidentially opened to me the wishes of her Imperial Majesty. Yet I think their silence upon that head was expressive, as they could not be ignorant that the information of the Court of England was such as, without the contrary was particularly specified, must lead them to conclude that H.I.M. had a decided preference for the Czartoryski family.

The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor mentioned very particularly to-day how anxious this country was with regard to the succession of the Crown of Poland. It is not for me to presume to give advice, especially where I have no absolute foundation to reason upon, but I think I am sure that nothing would so thoroughly establish the English interest in this empire as falling in with their views with regard to that country.

Mr. Wroughton to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

My Lord,— Warsaw: January 23, 1763.

I beg leave to refer your Excellency to what I had the honour of writing you the 15th, and it was then suspected that M. de Borck, who had applied to Count Kayserling for a passport, and

[1] See note, p. 174.

was refused, would not have undertaken so disagreeable a journey; but, however, that gentleman is now on the road to your place, and your Lordship will soon see the issue of his commission, and I hope you will be so good as to inform me of all that passes relating to him, as it is of no small importance to me here.

The King has summoned, or intends to summon, a *Senatus Consilium* for the 28th of next month; I cannot see with what view, except to exasperate or animate the nation by the partisans of the Court speaking upon what they call the Russian invasion of Courland, and then citing an extraordinary Diet under the title of a Confederation. I say this appears to be their only view, but in my opinion it is a very dangerous one, for what will be the consequence? Can they pretend to make the Court of Russia undo what is now done in favour of Biren? A contra-Confederation (possibly assisted by Russia) will be set up against them by the Czartoryski family, and it is the general voice that that party is greatly superior to the Court in the interior parts and provinces of the kingdom. Add to this the desolation to the estates of many of the leading people on both sides that must naturally be the consequence of this kind of civil war.

Her Imp[l] Majesty has been pleased to confer the Order of St. Alexander on the young M. Branitzki, a great partisan of the Czartoryskis; but even their friends seem surprized that this gentleman, who is only a colonel in the Polish service (a very poor and common title or advance), should receive a ribbon, which surely cannot be fallen in disrepute since so short a time as I have left the country.

It is said that the King of Prussia has sent his ultimate propositions to the Court of Vienna, from whence we are in great expectation of their resolution, and that the *dédommagement* which he intends to the Electorate of Saxony is the restitution of some millions of crowns which he possesses in the billets of the *Stire Bank*. I cannot assert the truth of this, however, as it is some time that I have no manner of news from Mr. Mitchell.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Mr. Mitchell.

Moscow: January 25 (N.S.), 1763.

Dear Sir,—

Her Imp. Maj., in consequence of the communications made to her from England, intends to send directions to her ministers at

the Diet, and the several Courts of Germany, to promote to the utmost the neutrality for the Empire. That affair will, however, in all probability be decided before this measure can have any effect. This Court interests itself very much for the Elector of Saxony. Their ideas upon that head you must have heard from Prince Repnin. Probably before you receive this the Plenipotentiaries of Prussia, Vienna, and Saxony have either settled the interests of their several Courts, or by separating decided that Germany is to feel the miseries of another campaign. You will particularly oblige me in sending the earliest intelligence of their determinations. Whatever reports of the contrary may be industriously spread in other countries there is a great appearance here of tranquillity, and I am firmly persuaded that the present Government is established; of this I am most sure, that (unless she greatly deceives me) for the interests of England we should wish the Empress every success she can wish herself. The Great Duke has been ill again, but is much better.

Field Marshal Münnich to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Monseigneur,—

La dernière lettre très instructive que votre Excellence a eu la bonté de m'envoyer par son courrier m'a fait d'autant plus de plaisir qu'elle m'a mis au fait des procédés du Roi de Prusse avec Sa Majesté le Roi votre maître, ce dont je n'étais par suffisamment instruit.

Je prie votre Excellence d'être bien persuadée que personne en Russie ne prend plus d'intérêt à la gloire et à la prospérité de la Grande-Bretagne que moi, qui admire également la sagesse du Roi, l'habilité de son ministère et la valeur des commandeurs et officiers de ses flottes et armées; aussi je m'en rapporte à tout ce que V. E. me fait l'honneur de me dire sur la conduite du Roi de Prusse.

J'avoue cependant que je ne m'intéresse pas moins à ce qui regarde les intérêts et la gloire de ce monarque, et c'est pour ce motif que je vais faire part à V. E. de mes sentiments sur ce sujet.

1° Je suppose que si le Monarque Prussien n'eût par ses qualités transcendantes su faire tête à tant de forces supérieures et combinées de la Russie, de la maison d'Autriche, de la France, des

états de l'Empire et de Suède, et qu'il eût succombé, tous les ennemis de la cause commune se seraient emparés de la Basse-Saxe, des états de Hanovre et de Brunswick, etc., et qu'aussi, selon les vues de la Cour de Vienne, les prérogatives des Princes et Etats du Corps Germanique auraient été anéanties, la religion protestante en Allemagne inquiétée et que dans une telle situation la paix générale n'aurait pu se faire avec autant d'avantage même pour la Grande-Bretagne qu'il y a tout lieu d'espérer qu'elle se fera par l'habilité, la constance et la valeur de *Frédéric le Grand.*

2° Il m'a toujours paru que le subside de quatre millions d'écus d'Allemagne, accordé au Roi de Prusse depuis l'an 1758 par l'Angleterre, était fort modique, et que vu la grande défense que cette puissance a toujours faite si généreusement pour soutenir la guerre, elle aurait pu donner à S. M. Prussienne un subside annuel d'un million au moins de livres sterling, non pas pour quelques années limitées mais jusqu'à la conclusion de la paix générale, sans en exclure le Roi de Prusse, ainsi que la convention qui s'était fait mutuellement entre les deux Rois l'exigeait.

3° La paix que le Roi de Prusse avait conclue l'année passée avec la Russie et la Suède ne pouvait être qu'agréable au Roi d'Angleterre, puisque son allié se trouvait par ce moyen en état d'arrêter les forces supérieures des ennemis communs, et si le Roi de Prusse en faisant sa paix avec le plus redoutable de ses ennemis, a manqué d'en faire part aussitôt au Roi de la Grande-Bretagne, il n'a point contrevenu au traité, puisque cette paix particulière lui fournissait les moyens de soutenir efficacement les intérêts communs des deux alliés.

4° Proposer de la part d'Angleterre au Roi de Prusse d'essayer à entamer quelques négociations de paix avec la Cour de Vienne, et lui demander quelles étaient les ressources sur lesquelles il comptait pour soutenir la guerre après les malheurs qu'il avait essuyés et la diminution sensible de ses forces, n'était-ce pas marquer de la défiance en ses talens héroïques, dans lesquels il a toujours puisé des ressources, pour réparer si promptement les différens échecs que ses armes ont éprouvés dès le commencement de la guerre ; et quand il eut délibéré quelque temps pour répondre à des propositions qui paraissaient blesser la grandeur de son caractère, pouvait-il répondre autre chose que :

' Je suis résolu de faire la guerre jusqu'à ce que je puisse obtenir une paix convenable à mes intérêts et à ma gloire ' ?

Il me paraît donc que la Cour de Londres pouvait passer sur ces formalités, qui n'auraient point dû altérer l'amitié, l'union et la confiance des deux Rois ; qu'ainsi le Parlement pouvait continuer au Roi de Prusse le subside une fois accordé ; que l'on ne devait point l'exclure du Traité de Paix et l'exposer seul à continuer une guerre sanglante et coûteuse dans le centre de l'Allemagne et dont l'issue dépend du sort.

5° Je n'ai pas jusqu'ici l'idée que l'on puisse regarder la maison d'Autriche comme un ennemi plus affaibli que le Roi de Prusse, puisqu'il est de fait que jamais cette puissance n'a eu des forces si formidables ni des troupes en si bon état que celles que la Reine de Hongrie a actuellement sur pied ; aussi les provinces et les riches et magnifiques états de la maison d'Autriche n'ont pas été ruinés, comme ceux du Roi de Prusse, et le recouvrement des Pays de Gueldres et de Clêves ne lui sont presque d'aucune ressource, puisqu'il est obligé d'y employer des troupes pour leur défense, ce qui divise ses forces et diminue son armée.

Je soumets ces réflexions aux sentimens, aux lumières de V. E. dans la conviction que tout cela tournera à la gloire du Monarque Prussien. Mon plus grand désir cependant est de voir jouir toute l'Europe d'une paix générale solide et durable.

Je me recommande à la très prétieuse amitié de V. E., dont je me glorifie infiniment, et je serai toujours avec l'attachement le plus distingué, Monseigneur, de V. E. le très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

B. C. DE MÜNNICH.

à Saint-Pétersbourg : le 27 janr 1763.

Separate and Secret Dispatch from the Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow : January 27 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

It was not till last night that I received her Imperial Majesty's answer to the communications which I had made in consequence of your Lordship's dispatch by the messenger Ardouin. They desired me to return the paper when I had read it ; the contents were as follows :—

' L'Impératrice a reçu avec reconnaissance et comme une marque

particulière de l'amitié de S. M. Britannique la confidence qu'elle lui a fait faire de ses démarches présentes pour établir la neutralité des Princes d'Allemagne, ainsi que la proposition de concourir par ses bons offices au même objet. Comme S. M. Impériale par son amour pour le genre humain a à cœur tout ce qui peut contribuer à une pacification générale, cette invitation qu'elle entrevoit sous ce point de vue ne peut que lui être très agréable, et quoiqu'il lui paroisse, vu la distance des lieux, que ce qu'elle pourroit faire de son côté pour le succès de ce même dessein sera trop tard, cependant pour assurer le Roi du désir sincère qu'elle a d'unir ses intérêts aux siens elle n'en a pas moins fait parvenir à ses ministres, tant à Vienne et à Berlin qu'à Ratisbon, les instructions nécessaires pour porter les parties intéressées à la conclusion d'une pareille convention avec ordre d'agir sur cette affaire dans un parfait concert avec les ministres de la Grande-Bretagne et de Hanovre qui pourront se trouver aux mêmes endroits.

'En retour de l'intimité avec laquelle la cour d'Angleterre s'est ouverte à celui-cy sur cette négociation pour la neutralité, S. M. Impériale a ordonné à son ministère de confier à monsieur l'Ambassadeur, pour qu'il en fasse l'usage nécessaire auprès de sa cour, que comme il est du commun intérêt de la Russie et de la Grande-Bretagne relativement aux affaires d'Allemagne de soutenir la maison de Saxe, il lui paroissoit à propos de songer à procurer un établissement à quelqu'un des princes de cette maison en Allemagne, ce qu'il seroit possible de faire au moyen de quelque sécularisation ou autre dédommagement, et il est à présumer que la cour de Berlin n'iroit pas au contraire. Ce seroit pour le Roi de Pologne une consolation et une sorte de dédommagement de ce que ses états ont souffert pendant la guerre, qui à ce moyen ne retomberoit pas à sa charge si la cour de Londres est disposée à entrer dans ces vues comme Sa Majesté se le persuade, d'autant plus que par cette attention en faveur de la Saxe cette cour-là sera portée à embrasser tel système que la Grande-Bretagne conjointement avec ses alliés aura envie d'établir pour assurer le repos général de l'Europe. Elle joindra volontiers ses bons offices à ceux du Roi pour en procurer le succès, et on pourra y travailler même indépendamment que la paix fût conclue entre les cours de Vienne et de Berlin, puisqu'il n'est pas nécessaire de guerre pour proposer et faire une telle sécularisation, comme il peut même arriver et on doit le croire que pour plus de sûreté de

la paix, les parties contractantes inviteront quelques autres puissances à y accéder et à la garantir. Ce sera alors l'occasion favorable pour entamer une pareille négociation en faveur d'un prince de Saxe, et on doit espérer qu'elle réussira pourvu que les deux cours agissent d'intelligence et se concertent à tems sur les démarches qu'il conviendra de faire. Le Ministère a ordre encore de prévenir Monsieur l'Ambassadeur que Sa Majesté Impériale a demandé la participation de la France pour la même fin et qu'elle pense que cette cour ne s'éloignera pas d'y travailler de concert avec les deux Couronnes.'

I have had several conversations with the ministers upon the subject, and they hinted to me her Imperial Majesty's intentions with regard to Saxony, upon which I could not help mentioning that the conduct of this Court in relation to Poland did not imply that very particular regard for the interest of his Polish Majesty. Then the Vice-Chancellor answered that her Imperial Majesty considered the affairs of Saxony and Poland in very different lights. It did not appear to me a very forced construction of that expression to suppose it meant that her Imperial Majesty considered the Elector of Saxony as the ally of the Queen of Hungary, and therefore was desirous if possible of saving that Princess from the disagreeable alternative of either giving up his interests entirely or of being obliged to find an indemnification for him herself. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor both assured me that the Empress did not consider it in that light, and that her conduct arose from her real good wishes to the House of Saxony, and her thinking it was for the good of the common cause that it should not be totally abandoned.

If his Majesty should think it of any consequence to renew a correspondence with the Court of Sweden there is a channel through which I have reason to believe I could obtain the proper lights upon that subject. After the affront put upon his Majesty's minister it is necessary for me, without particular instructions, rather to decline than to seek any conversation that can have the appearance of making the first advances to that country, but some pains have been taken to make me believe that neither the Court nor the majority of the nation are indisposed to England.[1] I

[1] See, for the condition of affairs in Sweden, p. 16. See also p. 140, note. Sweden was still in straits for money, and France at that time was behindhand with her subsidies. A strong party was now anxious to renew diplomatic

believe there is a very regular and a very intimate correspondence between the Empress and the Queen of Sweden. I am sorry to mention that the Great Duke has again been extremely ill. He was said to be much better yesterday, which I believe, as Mr. Panin, who seldom stays out of an evening, supped at the Hetman Rosamowski's, which he certainly would not have done if his Imperial Highness, whose room he lodges in, had not been greatly recovered. You will have heard from Mr. Wroughton that a person is coming here from Warsaw to solicit the affairs of Courland.[1] He is expected at Moscow to-day. He will make a fruitless journey and meet with a very cold reception.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: January 31 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

The Great Duke's illness has proved to be the measles, and he is said to be in a very good way. Her Imperial Majesty has for some time past very greatly distinguished M. Breteuil, the French minister, upon which he seems to presume a good deal. He is lively and speaks his own language well, and I should hope it is rather as his conversation is entertaining than from any political reasons that she takes so much notice of him. M. Borcke, who was coming from Warsaw, was called back upon his Court's hearing the news that Duke Biren was arrived at Mittau.[2] They have given a Memorial to Count Keyserling which I am informed is beyond measure offensive. I will try to get a copy or at least a sight of it.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Countess of Suffolk.

February 3, 1762.

The Carnival is now nearly at an end, but as yet the hurry of pleasures increases daily. I had the honour of seeing the Empress

relations with England. See Wilkinson's (otherwise Gedda's) despatches, January 1762 to November 29, 1763 (R.O. *Sweden*, vol. cxxvii.), and Ramsey's letter, October 6, 1761, *ibid.*

[1] See pp. 196 and 199, note.

[2] John Ernest, Duke Biren, made public entrance into Mittau January 22, 1763.

at my house on Monday last. It was a *bal masqué* for about one hundred and fifty persons. I would not venture (as I had not sufficient knowledge of my servants to depend upon the entertainment being well conducted) to write her Majesty directly, but took care to put tickets in her way. One hundred and six persons sat down to supper, and there was room for more. The company, by all I can learn, were all extremely well pleas'd. I cannot say but that in my opinion things might have been better managed. My servants are not by any means so ready as I could wish, and if I had not a little of the *maître d'hôtel* myself the family, ill-regulated as it is, would be still more confus'd. I expected it would be so from the hurry in which I was obliged to get almost an entirely new set of servants. I believe this is without exception the most expensive place in Europe, and at the same time where, to be on a tolerable footing, the greatest show is necessary. The Russians themselves have all their attendants and all their provisions, except wine, for nothing, and nobody who has not been here can have an idea of the profusion of meat and game which appears upon their tables; they expect to see the same at the houses of foreigners, without considering the difference of the situation. We have now masquerades at Court or at some private house every night; a hot supper of three courses and a dessert at ten o'clock, and then minuets, country dances, and Polish dances till everybody stops from being no longer able to proceed. Few people sit still, as everything under seventy, at least, leads up a Polish dance. All the ladies about the Court are jaded to death, and out of fourteen maids of honour thirteen are lame. In a fortnight a great deal of bigotry will succeed this gay scene. In the Greek Church if you keep the appointed fasts rigidly, and cross yourself twenty times a day, you are a good Christian.

Mr. Mitchell to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Berlin: Wednesday, February 2, 1763.

The unexpected arrival of Spencer, the messenger, affords me the pleasure of being able to write with more freedom than I could otherwise have done.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that the King of Prussia is extremely pleased with the late marks of attention and

friendship shown to him by his Majesty, and has not only desired me to signify the same but has directed his ministers in England to express his gratitude in the strongest terms, and has sent to them full powers for signing a double neutrality for the Netherlands, &c.

If publick and universal reports may be relyed upon, peace between the Empress Queen, the Elector of Saxony, and the King of Prussia is actually signed, greatly to the advantage of the latter, as is said, for nobody knows the conditions of these Treaties, this whole transaction having been conducted in the Conferences at Hubertsbourg with the greatest mystery and secrecy, but his Prussian Majesty having issued orders for the removal of some of his magazines in Saxony into his own country, and likewise for suspending certain military preparations necessary for the ensuing campaign, has given rise to this universal report of peace, and is a plain proof that he looks upon a general pacification as almost certain.[1]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 3 (N.S.), 1763.

The hurry of diversions continues, and will continue about a fortnight longer, and then cease at once, as Lent is much more strictly observed here than in the Roman Catholic countries. Her Imperial Majesty honoured my house with her presence on Monday evening last. The company was in masque, and consisted of about one hundred and fifty persons. There have been reports lately of fresh disturbances in the Guards. I cannot find that there is any great foundation for them, though there certainly is a lurking spirit of discontent amongst the soldiers and inferior officers. The Empress behaves as if she thought herself in perfect security—goes about the streets in an open sledge at night with very few attendants, and when she goes to the Senate has often only two footmen behind the coach.

[1] Frederic accepted the double neutrality of his estates in Westphalia and of the Austrian Netherlands as a measure which ensured the restitution of the disputed territories, and as a mark of the renewal of the ancient friendship between England and Prussia. See Frederic to Knyphausen and Michel, January 26, 1763, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des II^ten*. vol. xxii.

The general dissipation which prevails here has hitherto prevented me from getting a sight of that paper which I mentioned in my last had been delivered at Warsaw to Count Keyserling; but as I imagined that the purport of it, as well as the terms in which by all accounts it is conceived, might have cooled that zeal which her Imperial Majesty has lately expressed for the interests of the House of Saxony, I mentioned my thoughts yesterday as they naturally occurred to the Vice-Chancellor. He told me he was persuaded her Imperial Majesty's intentions were still the same. I then said that possibly it might be so, but that, as I was to write to my Court this evening, I should be obliged to him if he would, from me, ask her Imperial Majesty what I was to mention upon the subject. He dined with me to-day, and told me that she still continued in the same opinion, that some amends should be made to the Elector of Saxony for all the calamities he had suffered.

Mr. Wroughton to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Warsaw: February 6, 1763.

The King of Poland's health, which has been greatly indisposed about 9 days, and for two days threatening the worst consequences, has taken so favourable a turn since Friday morning that his Majesty is entirely out of danger, and people's minds quite restored to their former tranquillity.

An abscess is formed in his leg, which was opened this morning by the advice of his physicians, and the bottom and matter found as they could wish them, so that by the blessing of God this indisposition, which has so much alarmed us, may, with care, be the prolongation of his life for some years. I could not fail to impart to your Lordship this amendment, which will certainly give you so much pleasure.

Prince Lubomirski [1] is returned here in good health, and full of praises of her Imperial Maj. for the gracious reception she was pleased to give him and the favours he received during his short

[1] Prince Lubomirski had been despatched in the autumn of 1762 to St. Petersburg to persuade the Czarina to take active measures to oblige the King of Prussia, as well as the Austrians, to evacuate Saxony. See Frederic to Benoît at Warsaw, September 20, 1762, with note, *Polit. Corresp. Friedrich's des II^ten^*. vol. xxii.

mission at your place. It is probable he has been ordered to hold this language, to avoid a second reprimand being given to Mr. Prass [1] for some improper, disrespectful expressions which the people of the Court entertained themselves with some time ago; tho' he has certainly reason for all the grateful acknowledgment to that incomparable Princess. He has also spoke to me repeatedly of the politeness he received from your Lordship.

We have received as yet no news of the peace in Germany, which surprises us, as it was expected yesterday without fail. The interest of our Court, as well as of Versailles, will, I imagine, make them neglect no stone to put an end to this destructive war, which, by its continuation, may produce many circumstances that may involve us a second time in the dispute.

I don't think your Lordship would risque committing a fault, if a proper opportunity should offer of laying me at the Empress' feet with the most dutiful expressions of attachment and wishes for her health and prosperity. I have in my lifetime received too many marks of her protection and condescension to doubt of her being displeased at such a token of my gratitude. However the execution of this request is submitted entirely to your pleasure and discretion.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 7 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

As the advantages which England may hereafter derive from reserving to herself a right by the Treaty of Commerce to carry on a trade with Persia are indisputable, and as it is evident from the conversation I have had with the ministers that, setting aside their dread of the Persians establishing a maritime force upon the Caspian, they are fully sensible that it is for the advantage of Russia that the English merchants should carry on that commerce, I shall use my best diligence not totally by the new treaty to give up an object which, though at the moment, from the circumstances of the times, it may be only considered in a secondary light, some time hence perhaps will prove of the greatest importance. In

[1] Johann Moritz Prass, or Prasse, Saxon Resident at St. Petersburg.

this view I have conversed with the Consul and the merchants upon the subject, and received from one of them a proposal which, after making some alterations, I translated into French and delivered on Saturday last to the Chancellor. Inclosed I send your Lordship a copy. Before this, as it appeared to me that at all events it might be advantageous to the English merchants to enjoy the same privileges at Astrachan which they are allowed at Petersbourg, Archangel, etc., I mentioned it to the Vice-Chancellor, and at the same time proposed that this Government should allow a free mart for the Persian commodities at Astrachan, the English paying three per cent. transit duty for such goods as they conveyed from thence to Petersbourg for exportation. He seemed to approve of the idea, but I cannot yet learn how far the Colledge of Commerce may be of the same opinion. As, notwithstanding my having six weeks ago applyed to the Ministry that some stop might be put to the ill-usage the English merchants receive from the magistrates of Riga,[1] there were letters from thence last week which mentioned that no order had as yet been sent from hence to stop those proceedings, I gave a note upon that subject on Friday to the Chancellor, who told me some care should be taken immediately.

Mémoire donné au Chancelier le 5 *de Fév. N.S.* 1763 *sur le Commerce de la Perse.*

Comme la conduite imprudente de Mons. Elton[2] a fait une impression sur le Gouvernement de la Russie qu'il sera difficile d'effacer, et qu'en conséqueuce il a été insinué à l'ambassadeur d'Angleterre qu'on n'est pas disposé d'accorder par un nouveau traité les mêmes privilèges aux marchands anglois à l'égard du commerce de la Perse, dont ils jouissoient par celui de 1734, il lui a paru que dans la proposition suivante on pourroit trouver un milieu qui seroit également avantageux aux deux nations.

Qu'il sera accordé aux Anglois d'avoir une maison commerçante ou comptoir à Astrachan, qu'elle consistera seulement de deux ou trois personnes à qui il sera permis d'avoir quatre commis et deux surveillants ou supercargos.

Qu'on tiendra prêt chaque printems d'abord que la glace sera

[1] See p. 90.

[2] See p. 118, note.

fondu et que le port de Yarick est libre, deux vaisseaux de soixante à septante tonneaux pour porter telles marchandises à Engeli que les facteurs anglois jugeront à propos; que ces vaisseaux seront navigués par des Russes, mais qu'ils seroient sous les ordres des surveillants du comptoir anglois, un desquels sera permis de passer dans le printems sur chaque vaisseau et de revenir dans l'automne, et qu'ils partiront d'Engeli sur le 25 d'octobre au plus tard.

Et afin de prévenir toute espèce de chicane et de querelle qu'il ne sera loisible à aucun sujet Russe, Indien, Arménien ou Tartare, ni à qui que ce soit que des Anglois d'embarquer des marchandises ou de passer sur les dits vaisseaux.

Qu'on conviendra du fret qu'on doit payer pour ces vaisseaux ou par mois ou pour la saison.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February (N.S.) 10, 1763.

My Lord,—

A letter received last night from Mr. Wroughton informs me that notwithstanding M. Borck's journey was said to be laid aside he is now upon the road to Moscow. The Court of Warsaw must be very ill-informed if they promise themselves the least success from his negotiations. By what Mr. Wroughton further mentioned there is a great appearance of everything tending to confusion in Poland; if it should prove so her Imperial Majesty will not in all probability long remain an idle spectatress.

I cannot conclude without taking some notice of an entertainment at which I was present last night. It was a Russian tragedy which was performed at the palace before the Empress in a most magnificent hall fitted up for the occasion with a stage, scenes, and all proper decorations. The subject of the drama was a Russian story, and, as far as any judgment may be formed from reading what speaks itself to be an incorrect French translation, the sentiments and the dialogue would do honour to any author in any country. The Countess Bruce [1] acted the principal part with a spirit, ease, and propriety which is seldom met with even

[1] See p. 224.

amongst those who are bred to the stage. Two other characters were admirably represented by Count Orlow, and a son of the late Marshal Shouvalow. Count Orlow's figure is very striking, and bears some resemblance to that of the Earl of Errol. After the play there was an entertainment of dancing performed by the maids of honour and several of the first nobility. I believe so many fine women were never seen upon any stage, and must add that few countries could produce them. The Countess Strogonow, daughter to the Great Chancellor, the Countess Nariskin, and a young lady, sister to Colonel Sievers, who was in England, and daughter of the Great Marshal of the Court, distinguished themselves particularly. The orchestra was composed of gentlemen. The elegance and magnificence of the whole was such that what may appear a laboured description is but barely doing justice to it. When we consider how very few years have elapsed since the politer arts were first introduced into this country, and how considerable a part of that time they have been but little cultivated, it will appear very extraordinary that a performance of the kind can have been planned and executed in a few weeks.

Voltaire's 'Tragedy of Zara' was acted upon the same theatre two days before; the actors, particularly a young lady who performed the part of Zara, were deservedly applauded.

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

St. James's: February 11, 1763.

My Lord,—

[*Cypher.*] In answer to the inquiry made by the Russian ministers concerning the King's sentiments in relation to a successor to the Crown of Poland, it is his Majesty's pleasure that your Lordship should acquaint those gentlemen that the King has not formed any plan himself with regard to such an event, that if anything could induce his Majesty to take a part in favour of some particular candidate it would be the desire of contributing what might be in his power to the succession of that disposition which should appear to be most favourable to the views and interests of the Empress of Russia, but that whilst the King remains totally unacquainted with the intention of her Imperial Majesty in relation thereto, concerning which your Lordship's dispatch which I am

now answering of December 28 last is entirely silent, it is not possible to give a direct and particular answer to the question proposed; that for the present, therefore, his Majesty must content himself by assuring the Empress, as your Lordship will accordingly do, of his very sincere inclination to promote, so far as may depend upon his influence, what may be most agreeable to the Princess in the affairs of the Polish succession, and acting therein, when the case shall exist, in perfect concert with her, and that he will not fail to acquaint her Imperial Majesty with his particular sentiments with regard to the candidate whomsoever she may think her interest concerns to support, as soon as his Majesty shall be intrusted with the knowledge of her resolutions.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 14 (N.S.), 1763.

Her Imperial Majesty did me the honour yesterday of talking to me with great appearance of confidence upon the affairs of this country, expressing in the strongest terms how much she thought it incumbent upon her to study the advantage and happiness of her people. She was also pleased to mention that the French minister was so entertaining that he frequently led her into longer conversations than she intended. If I had not known before to a certainty that all my letters were opened the expressions she made use of would have convinced me that she knew the contents of my dispatch of the 31st of the last month. This idea (though the performance had all the merit I gave it) determined me to write so particular a detail of the tragedy which was acted at Court, as I knew she wished and expected some notice should be taken of it. Bestucheff, who has been long ill, was at Court last night and greatly noticed by the Empress. By an expression he made use of to me I find he is no longer upon good terms with Panin. There was an account yesterday that the King of Poland was dangerously ill. The Baron de Breteuil leaves this country the beginning of April; he returns to Paris before he sets out upon his embassy to Sweden. Count Caunitz leaves Moscow to-morrow. He dines here to-day with all the foreign ministers. This week we shall see nothing of the Russians, but I hope that some time in the next the Treaty of Commerce will be taken into consideration.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Countess of Suffolk.

February 14, 1762.

Dear Madam,—

The Carnival is over. The virgins, wives, and widows mourn. Mushrooms, pickled cucumbers, prayers, and priests succeed to the active dance, the becoming dress, the genial banquet, and the gallant officers. Your true good Greek abstains for the first week of Lent from every earthly thing which innate sensuality disposes human frailty to delight in. The females suffer most. No ornament, not the faintest shade of red is allowed them; their roses all must fade. Nothing is left them to subsist on but faith, hope, and meditation—faith in the constancy of their lovers, hope that the same dear delusions may return, and meditation upon pleasures past. I have not suffered myself to be absolutely carried away by the torrent, but have glided down the edge of the stream for company. To give you in a few sober words a rational idea of what has past, the Empress has laboured by magnificence, expense, and her own example to teach her subjects to divert themselves. They are a little awkward at first, and tread the paths of refin'd pleasure with the same caution that the forest deer first enter an inexperienced pasture—but they will graze in time. I take every method in my power to live upon an easy footing with the Russians. The foreigners who have long resided here tell me it is impossible. Yet I have so far succeeded as to find myself and my brother a few nights ago the only foreigners invited to a very agreeable ball-supper. I must not, however, presume too much upon this one instance, but let the event turn out as it may, it is in some sort the duty of my situation to try, and the attempt is rather an amusement. My views in this are by no means refin'd. I only work to convince them that the English have at least as good ideas of society as the French, to acquire some knowledge of their manners and opinions, and to pass my own time here agreeably. In Lent I shall see little of them, and in the first week nothing at all, for they literally are obliged to shut themselves up with their priests, and to eat nothing but vegetables. Pleasure first, and now mortification has put an absolute stop to business, but I flatter myself that another week will set our negociations in motion.

I wait with great impatience for an answer to my letter relative to my brother's desire of returning to England.

. . . . . Your affectionate nephew,

BUCKINGHAM.

From 'Russian Memoranda.'

Countess Bruce, though more than thirty years of age, is the first ornament of the circle at St. Petersburg. She dresses well, dances tolerably, speaks French with fluency and elegance, has read a dozen plays and as many *brochures*, and has naturally a partiality for a nation to whom she is indebted for all her acquired accomplishments. Not averse to gallantry, but discreet in her choice of those she favours, her affections, ever subservient to her judgment and studiously observant of those of her mistress, fix upon an object so connected with the favourite of the hour as must necessarily introduce her to the confidence of the secrets and the society of the pleasures. Thus when Poniatowski was in Russia she distinguished Czartoryski as now she distinguishes Alexis Grigorievitch Orlow.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 17 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

The news of the King of Poland's illness has even in this week of devotion and retirement occasioned a great deal of agitation here. Many think he is dead, but the Saxon minister declares that by his account the attack is not dangerous. As Mr. Wroughton has wrote to me very frequently of late I should almost imagine by my not having heard from him upon this occasion that the letters have been stopt. Count Brühl would undoubtedly keep the King's death a secret as long as possible, but at this time I believe he would find himself very narrowly watched, as it is an event in which so many interest themselves. An abbé, one of the French minister's family, mentioned a few days ago that the King of Poland's death would probably detain

the Baron de Breteuil here.[1] I should not be surprized if that gentleman was to imagine that his presence might have an influence upon her Imp. Majesty, but from the conversations I have had with her, as well as with her Ministers, there is no great probability that his eloquence will convince her that it is for the advantage of Russia to establish a French dependant upon the throne of Poland. The Austrian and French ministers have had long conferences since this interesting news came. I think that there has been of late an increasing intimacy between them. Unless some change should happen in the Administration at Vienna the Court of France will maintain in all probability their ascendant even after the war is concluded.

Mr. Mitchell to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Berlin: Saturday, February 19, 1763.

My Lord,—

Since I wrote to your Excellency by post of the 15th I have received a letter from Count Finckenstein, his Prussian Majesty's Secretary of State, acquainting me that the definitive treaties between the Empress Queen, the Elector of Saxony, and the King his master was signed on the 15th instant at the Castle of Hubertsbourg, and that the restitution of the county of Glatz and of the Prussian dominions in Westphalia was expressly stipulated by these treaties, for the basis of which they had assumed the Treaty of Breslau, 1742, and that of Dresden, 1745. As that gentleman enters into no farther details of the articles, and has not yet transmitted to me a copy of the treaties, I can give your Excellency no more particulars. The exchange of the ratifications it is expected will be on the 25th instant, or before the end of the month. [*Cypher.*] My former letter to Yr. Ex. contains everything I know concerning this important transaction, which has been carryed into execution with an amazing celerity. Everybody is at a loss to account for the Court of Vienna's agreeing so readily to a peace so honourable and advantageous to the King of Prussia;

[1] M. de Breteuil was the agent for Louis XV.'s secret diplomacy, and Poland was the special object of that diplomacy. See p. 41; see also *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 214.

it is, indeed, believed that his Pruss. Maj. has promis'd his vote for the Arch-Duke Joseph to be chose King of the Romans, but as it is said no cessions are made by that monarch to the House of Austria, nor no indemnification granted to Saxony, this promise of secrecy does by no means account for the great event that has happen'd; if therefore your Ex. can discover what most secret conditions have influenced the Court of Vienna I beg you will let me know.

The Courts of Vienna and Prussia have reserved to themselves the power of naming their friends and allies in separate articles, which articles shall have the same force as if inserted word for word in the body of the treaty, and is to be ratifyed by the two high contracting parties; the King our master and the Empress of Russia are invited by his Prussian Majesty to accede to this treaty.

[Separate and secret.]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 21 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

I had flattered myself as well from what had been told me before my arrival here as from the assurances I have since received of the good disposition of this country to England, and more particularly from that appearance of confidence with which her Imperial Majesty has lately honoured me, that the negotiations his Majesty has charged me with the conduct of would have at length been concluded agreeable to his wishes, allowing for that delay which is characteristic of every Russian minister. It is, therefore, no small disappointment to find that perhaps it will be necessary for me to try by intrigue and underhand application to obtain that which in fact it is the interest of this country to grant.

Panin (whose abilities I have formerly mentioned with a degree of deference which my further knowledge of them induces me to think they by no means deserve) is, I am afraid, entirely in the French interest and the engine their minister makes use of.[1] The dissipation of the Carnival, which I am persuaded the Empress at

[1] See p. 96. The French Government had at this time some idea of obtaining influence in Russia through Panin. See *Recueil des Instructions: Russie*, ii. 236

first gave into rather politically than from inclination, seems to have taken a little hold of her and withdrawn some of her attention from business. Her partiality for Count Orlow and the distinctions she shews him increase daily. He does not as yet presume upon it, however that servile adoration which the Russians ever pay to favourites may provoke him to it. Her finances are little attended to; the debts which it was said were to be discharged immediately remain unpayed; considerable sums are daily given away or lent to those who will never repay them, so that unavoidably her Imperial Majesty must very soon find herself in want of money, more especially if the King of Poland's death should make it necessary for her to march an army into that country. She is impatient to hear his Majesty's answer to what I mentioned in my dispatch of the 28th of Dec.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 21 (N.S.), 1768.

My Lord,—

I had a conference on Saturday evening with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, and was greatly surprized and mortifyed to find that not only they could as yet fix no time for entering into the consideration of the Treaty of Commerce, but also that their language with regard to the conclusion of it upon the terms prescribed to me by my instruction—nay, even upon the footing of the former treaty—is greatly altered. They told me that M. Breteuil was very urgent to bring forward a plan for a French Treaty of Commerce, but that, however, they were of opinion that the long commercial connection between England and Russia intitled us to have our negotiation first attended to. In my answer, after expressing my surprize and concern (both of which they might easily perceive were undissembled), I urged the very great advantages that Russia derived from her commerce with England[1]; that, on the contrary, they paid to France almost as much as they received from us, and that as far as I was informed, the idea of this country's availing itself of a trade with the French was chimerical. I further mentioned one fact which I was very sorry to have it in

[1] See for the condition of trade between England and Russia in this year, note c, appendix, p. 254.

my power to alledge, that our imports, particularly of cloth, greatly decrease, that one regiment of their Guards is now cloathed with the manufacture of this country, and that probably very soon the same regulation will take place with regard to the others, which must necessarily make the balance of trade still more considerable against us. In consequence of this conversation I am preparing a memorial which I will deliver as soon as possible. It appears to me that the views of France in proposing this treaty are more political than commercial, and they will only avail themselves of their negotiations as far as they prejudice ours. I cannot be sure that such is the intention, but feel too evidently that such is the effect, as at the Conference on Saturday last, when certain points of the treaty were mentioned which are likely to be disputed, the Vice-Chancellor immediately urged, 'Why should you insist upon them? M. Breteuil is very ready to give them up.'

[Most secret.]

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 23 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

Spencer the messenger arrived here this morning very ill with the gout in his head and feet. He has been thirty-five days coming from England, and one-and-twenty from Berlin.

As his Majesty's disapprobation of the note I sent Mr. Bestucheff gives me the greatest uneasiness I hope I shall be excused attempting in some degree to apologise for it.[1] From the manner in which the message was delivered to me it appeared that he was not informed that her Majesty had declined for the present renewing the Treaty of Alliance, and therefore it was natural for me to conclude that the offer he made was without the least authority from her. I did not, nor indeed could not, suppose that the Empress would propose underhand upon the 2nd of Decr. what she had formally rejected by her ministers upon the 22nd of Novr. I considered Bestucheff's conduct as calculated merely for his own advantage, with a view of obtaining a renewal of the favours he has so often received from England,[2] and your Lordship will perceive in the dispatch which accompanies the copy of that

[1] See pp. 107 and 200.

[2] See note 2, pp. 21 and 35.

note my doubt of his ability to be of any essential service. Also by what is mentioned in my dispatch of the 20th it appears, from the lights he desired to have from me, that his information was not extremely good, and the particular reserve of his behaviour to me in publick, as well as the mystery he observes upon every occasion, convinces me that her Imperial Majesty is totally unacquainted with our correspondence. I must beg leave to add that the words of my instructions (which only direct me to sound the dispositions of this Court in relation to the renewal of the Treaty of Alliance), the reasons which her Imperial Majesty had alledged for declining for the present entering into the consideration of it, together with the uncertain situation of this Government (for uncertain it must be for some time, tho' it is with pleasure that I see it in all appearance less so every day), had made me perhaps for the present less solicitous upon that head than I ought to have been, tho' not to a degree to have wrote that note had it not been evident to me that her Imperial Majesty would never be acquainted with the contents of it. The fact is that the person who delivered it to him saw him burn it the moment after he had read it. It is some satisfaction to me to think that such is the present situation of this Court that the error of my judgement has not as yet prejudiced his Majesty's affairs.

I observe by your Lordship's dispatch that you consider Mr. Bestucheff as an acting efficient minister, and in that light his Majesty directs me to apply through him to her Imperial Majesty. This, your Lordship will perceive by the former part of this dispatch, is a method I cannot take; but, in order not to lose a moment in executing to the best of my ability his Majesty's commands, I immediately wrote to Mr. Bestucheff a note to acquaint him that I had fresh instructions from my Court to solicit the renewal of the Treaty of Allyance, and intreating him to assist me to the utmost of his power in the negotiating of it, and at the same time desired particularly that he would inform me if her Imp. Majesty had ever mentioned any thing to him upon the subject. His answer was that the message he had sent me was entirely from himself, and that no conversation had ever passed between them, either at that time or since, upon the subject.

I have also been this evening with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, and communicated to them the inclosures in relation

to the neutrality for his Prussian Majesty's territories in Westphalia and the Austrian Netherlands inclosed in your Lordship's dispatch of the 15th, which Mr. Mitchell sent me by this courier, together with an account of the satisfaction he had expressed at this fresh instance of his Majesty's friendship and attention to his interests. I had before communicated the inclosures in your Lordship's dispatch of the 7th of Janry., and can with pleasure assure your Lordship that the confidence is received with the highest gratitude, and that the whole transaction is seen in the proper light. I further mentioned to them that, as now the war was in effect at an end, possibly her Imp. Majesty might no longer have any objections to entering into the consideration of the renewal of the former Treaty of Alliance, that I was persuaded nothing could be more agreeable to my Court, that I had reason to fear the long delay of taking an affair of so much consequence into consideration was attributed to some neglect of mine. I added that if her Imperial Majesty would order a plan to be prepared for that purpose, with such alterations from the old treaty as the different circumstances of the times might make it necessary, I would immediately dispatch a courier with it. They answered that her Imperial Majesty, upon her first coming to the Throne, had been greatly perplexed with the hurry of business and cautious of entering hastily into any engagements, that now she had more leisure they would speak to her again upon the subject, and flattered themselves that she would no longer make the same objections to it; but that at all events they could assure me of her thorough disposition and determination to cultivate the friendship of his Britannick Majesty. They have promised to speak to the Empress, if possible, to-morrow, so that I hope to be able to acquaint his Majesty with her sentiments upon the proposition in general before I close this dispatch, and, if they should be conformable to his wishes, will try to get a plan for the Treaty from this Court, and transmit it with the utmost expedition by this courier. They talked to me with great openness, and took great pains to convince me that they agreed with their Sovereign in her preferential regard for the English nation. As it appears to me that the Court of Vienna has in some degree disgusted both the Empress and her ministers, and that they are jealous and afraid of the French, particularly in relation to the affairs of Poland, there is no great reason to fear at present their

entering into any connection with either, but we may rather hope that these circumstances will dispose them to enter immediately into the Treaty of Alliance. As I was taking leave the Chancellor desired me to communicate any orders I received from his Majesty, in consequence of my dispatch of the 28th of Dec. in relation to the succession of Poland, as soon as possible. The Empress also spoke of it to me last Sunday. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor mentioned to me that her Imperial Majesty applyed herself so much to business as might be prejudicial to her health, that she would see and form her own opinion upon everything.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to Lord Halifax.

Moscow: February 24 (N.S.), 1763.

My Lord,—

I have been this evening with the ministers, who told me that they had not yet had any opportunity of receiving her Imperial Majesty's instructions, in consequence of the conference yesterday, but they added that they were persuaded in their own minds that now the war was at an end she would no longer object to the entering into a Treaty of Alliance, tho' possibly she might wish first to know the terms upon which the peace had been concluded between the Empress Queen and the King of Prussia. I answered that the peace concluded between those two Powers could have no immediate connection with the alliance of Great Britain and Russia, to which they in some degree acquiesced. They promise me a full account of her Imperial Majesty's sentiments in a few days.

The Great Duke is much better. Mr. Teplow[1] is appointed supervisor of the Ukraine tobacco, which is to be encouraged with the idea of supplying the French market.

P.S.—I am afraid that many of my dispatches must appear inconsistent, and my account of this country, and particularly of those who have the direction of affairs, varying from day to day. Such is the state of things that nobody knows who has the principal direction. I believe the Empress herself.

[1] See p. 59, note.

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

St. James's: February 25, 1763.

My Lord,—

As it appeared by some of your Excellency's former letters that the insisting absolutely upon the additional articles of advantage to our trade in Russia, which you were directed to endeavour to obtain in negotiating a renewal of our expired Treaty of Commerce,[1] would, in all probability, greatly protract, and might even endanger the whole transaction, I had the King's commands some time since to refer to the consideration of the Board of Trade, whether it would be advisable to adhere to the demand of such new concessions on the part of the Empress at the risk of losing the Treaty itself, that your Lordship might not be without instructions for your conduct upon that capital question, in case you should be put to so disagreeable a dilemma.

I have now received a full report from the Board above mentioned upon that question, a copy of which I send herewith;[2] and, as your Excellency will observe by the contents of it that their Lordships are clearly of opinion that, if a pure and simple renewal of the expired Treaty be all that can possibly be obtained, it ought not to be finally rejected for the sake of the additional privileges above referred to, I am to acquaint you that his Majesty is pleased to approve that advice, and would have you conform yourself thereto if the case should, contrary to his hope and desire, come to exist.

But your Lordship will at the same time understand that this instruction is meant only for the last extremity, and that you are to exert your utmost endeavours, and employ all the means in your power, for carrying the additional articles as proposed in the former report from the Board of Trade, which you received from Mr. Keith.

And it is his Majesty's pleasure that you should now pursue this commercial negotiation with all possible zeal and diligence, and especially since [*Cypher*] the great encouragement to hope for success in it received, as your last dispatch mentions, from Mr. Bestucheff, and of which the King does not doubt that you will have taken advantage [*Cypher ends*], since your Excellency must

[1] That of 1734.

[2] See p. 233 *et seq.*

be sensible that you cannot render a more acceptable service to his Majesty than by promoting to the utmost of your power the interests of his trading subjects.

With regard to what you mention concerning presents . . . I can only acquaint you now that the King would have you take no engagements to any body till you hear farther from me upon the subject; and his Majesty will also expect, before he takes a positive resolution in relation to that point, to hear from your Excellency more particularly what sums you would propose to be distributed to the persons mentioned in your dispatch, and in what proportion. . . .

From 'Russian Memoranda.'

By the eighth Article of the Treaty of 1734 the English were permitted to carry on a trade with Persia through Russia. By the new proposals this was no longer to be allowed.

The English merchants were now to pay for soldiers' quarters if they lived in hired houses, whereas by the former treaty their houses, whether their own or hired, were equally exempted from that charge (that is, in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Astrakhan, and Archangel [1]).

No indulgence was to be allowed the merchants at Riga (see p. 90).

By the old treaty the disputes of the English were decided by the Colledge of Commerce, or some other Court appointed in its place, but now they were to be subject to the judicature of the magistrates in the district provinces. Nor is there any stipulation of appeal. This makes them liable to infinite aggressions, which all foreigners are sure of experiencing from the Russians when they can hope to act with impunity.

Extract from the Report of the Lords of Trade on the Russian Treaty. Addressed to the Earl of Halifax.

Whitehall: February 11, 1763.

We have, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, taken into consideration the subject matter of your Lordship's letter to us of the 19th January, in which your Lordship states that great difficulties

[1] See the 16th Article of the Treaty of 1734.

were likely to occur in negotiating the additional advantages demanded of the Court of St. Petersburg in favour of our trade upon the renewal of a Treaty of Commerce, and requires our opinion whether it will be most advisable to accept, if it can be immediately obtained, a pure and simple renewal of the expired Treaty, or whether we should decline coming to such agreement for the sake of those further Articles which his Majesty's ambassador has been directed to endeavour to obtain.

As most of the additional propositions had been offered on the part of the Russia Company,[1] and as that Company had been, by his Majesty's commands, consulted upon everything which had been transacted relative to the negotiation, we thought it our duty to take their opinion upon this occasion. . . . In consequence of this reference the Governor of the Russia Company and one other member of it came before us on the 27th of January, and declared it to be the opinion of a Court of Assistants which they had held upon the occasion that, as they had so fully explained themselves with respect to the additions proposed to be made to the new Treaty in their memorial to this Board on the 19th of November last, they could not add anything further, unanimously agreeing that the liberty of one English merchant selling to another was a point of great consequence to the trade.[2]

As it appeared to us to be impossible to form a judgment or report an opinion upon so vague and indeterminate an answer as this was, we thought it our further duty to state to the gentlemen that the memorial to which they referred was applied only to some particular parts of the additional propositions, that your Lordship's letters referred to the whole, and that it was necessary for us, in order to obey his Majesty's commands, to know whether there were any, and if any which of the additional propositions offered by them, necessary to be insisted upon at all events. The gentlemen then present agreed to call another Court of Assistants, and to attend us again with their final resolution in a few days. And

[1] The 'Russia Company' had received their charter in the first year of Philip and Mary. It was Sebastian Cabot who first inspired the 'Merchant Adventurers' to explore the Northern Ocean, where the expedition, under Sir Hugh Willoughby and Richard Chancellor, penetrated to the Harbour of the Archangel Michael in 1553, and thence Chancellor opened up the overland route to Moscow. See Seymour's *London*, ii. 426.

[2] For this earlier memorial, see p. 82.

accordingly the Governor, with two other members of the Court, and two other gentlemen not of the Company, but concerned in this branch of our commerce, came before us on the 3rd instant and delivered to us a paper containing the resolution of the Court of Assistants, viz.:

Resolved—'That it is the opinion of this Court that the four articles mentioned in our former memorial of the 19th day of November last in relation to the intended Treaty of Commerce with the Court of St. Petersburg are very material and necessary for the benefit of our trade with Russia, but that the first point . . . relating to the privilege of one British merchant selling to another, is so essential and important that it ought to be insisted upon . . .'

One member of the Company even declared as an individual that he considered the proposition of one British merchant selling to another to be so essential to the freedom of the trade that he thought it would be better to have no treaty at all than that such a stipulation should not be obtained, whilst others as individuals did not appear to concur in that opinion to the full extent of it.

We shall not on this occasion enter upon a particular examination of the state of the British commerce with the Empire of Russia antecedent to the Treaty of 1734.[1] It is fully set forth in our representation to his Majesty of the 18th of May, 1762, and your Lordship will see by a reference to that representation that the grievances and obstructions then complained of by the merchants were so great as almost to render the trade impracticable with any freedom and security, and had not the wisdom and moderation of the Court of St. Petersburg interposed by consenting to the Treaty of 1734, which appears to us to contain greater priviledges in favour of the British commerce than almost any other treaty of the same kind existing with other States, and which applyed a remedy to every real and supposed grievance, the trade of G^{t} Britain in general and the interests of every individual would have stood in a very precarious situation. . . . The additional propositions contained in our representation of the 18th May, 1762, are either explanatory of that

[1] See for this treaty, concluded by Lord Forbes on behalf of the English Government, 'Notes on the Diplomatic Correspondence between England and Russia in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century,' in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. xiv. N. S.

treaty or are intended as remedies to new grievances which have since occurred, and we had hopes that the Court of S^{t} Petersburg, influenced by the same moderation which shewed itself in the year 1734, and by the important consideration of the great advantages resulting to the state from its commerce with G^{t} Britain, which are doubtless greater than those they derive from their commerce with any other nation, would have made no difficulty upon these points, and we shall still continue to maintain a hope that they may be admitted on the part of that Court. . . .

If, however, no consideration of equity or interest will induce the Court of S^{t} Petersburg to admit the remedy proposed to be applyed to grievances, the existence of which they do not appear to controvert, we are free to declare our opinion that the additional propositions are not of that great advantage as that it would be advisable by persisting in them to risque the renewal of a treaty which appears to us under all circumstances to be advantageous to G^{t} Britain, or to delay the acceptance of that renewal should it be offered, if by fresh delays the risque of losing it should be created.

As the Court of Assistants of the Russia Company, however, have insisted so strongly upon the proposition of one British subject being at liberty to sell to another, which does not yet appear to be the unanimous sense of all merchants concerned in this trade, it would not become us to give an opinion that may be considered to deviate from their sentiments without assigning some reasons for it, and therefore we must take the liberty to represent to your Lordship that this proposition has its foundation from a law of that Empire long since established, and now existing there, and which the subjects of that State consider as sècuring to them very valuable priviledges.

This law, however, either from its own impracticability or from the disadvantage which its operation would have upon the commerce of the State, has never been enforced (tho' sometimes threatened to be enforced) upon the British subjects residing and carrying on commerce in that Empire, even in times when that Court was most adverse to our interests, nor is there now the least probability that it will be carried into execution, so that in fact it does not appear to us that any real grievance does exist, but that the proposition is founded merely on the apprehension of it. It is to be wished, indeed, there was no foundation for the apprehension of it; but we think at the same time that no endeavour to obtain

a repeal of this would succeed, and that the insisting upon it might be attended with unfavourable consequences. . . .

We are apprehensive that even the bare mention of an alteration of the law in favour of foreigners might now (when the sovereign of the State is a foreigner) create a jealousy in the people which might tend to enforce rather than to abrogate it, and we are the more justifyed in this opinion as the Governor of the Russia Company did declare on his first attendance that the Court of Assistants were sensible that the agitating this point in negociation, if it could not be obtained, might be attended with great prejudice to the trade.

Upon the whole, my Lord, we beg leave to repeat our opinion that all the additional propositions may for the present at least be safely waived, provided the Court of St. Petersburg will renew and ratify in its full extent the Treaty of 1734, not doubting but that so long as a good understanding shall subsist between the two nations the merchants of Great Britain will have as great security against grievances which they may be apprehensive of, and as large dispensations upon those which from the form and constitution of that Empire they may really sustain, as if the remedies they propose were actually stipulated by treaty. . . .

Signed:
SANDYS,
BACON,
JOHN YORKE,
EDMUND THOMAS,
ORWELL.

[By Ardouin.]

Lord Halifax to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

St. James's: February 25, 1763.

My Lord,—

I have already acknowledged your Excellency's dispatch of the 19th past by Mann, and am now to acquaint you that the King received with particular pleasure as well the assurances contain'd in the answer, which was given you in writing, of her Imperial Majesty's general disposition and resolutions to live in the strictest friendship and confidence with his Majesty, as the explanation of her particular sentiments upon the subject of the communications which you made by the King's order, and the material information

concerning the Vice-Chancellor's letter to the late Czar, which has been the subject of so much discussion.[1]

The King was desirous that the Empress should be apprised of all that had passed in our late dispute with the Court of Berlin, as a particular mark of the confidence reposed by his Maiesty in that Princess. But I hope I may now congratulate your Lordship upon those disagreeable altercations being at an end. You have had an account from me of the several steps that had been taken by the King in support of his Prussian Majesty's interests, both with regard to the evacuation of his places in Westphalia and upon the Lower Rhine, and to procuring the neutrality of the Empire. I have now the pleasure to acquaint your Excellency that those marks of his Majesty's attention have been received by that Prince with the strongest declarations of gratitude, so that there seems a fair prospect of our living for the future upon a foot of good intelligence with that Court, to which his Majesty has the same inclination on his part that the Empress has declared that she has on hers; and your Excellency will, therefore, in consequence of this information, be able to judge in what manner your conduct towards the Prussian Minister at Moscow ought to be regulated.

I have nothing to add upon the subject of his Majesty's dispositions towards a renewal of the former good understanding with the Court of Vienna to what I wrote in my letter of the 1st of November, which your Lordship acknowledges the receipt of, no overtures of any kind having been as yet made from that quarter.

We are now every minute expecting an account of the conclusion of a treaty of peace between the Queen of Hungary, King of Poland, and King of Prussia, Mr. Mitchell having declared to me on Monday last by his Prussian Majesty's order that it was within a few days of being brought to perfection.[2]

[1] See p. 193.

[2] The Peace of Hubertsburg was signed Febuary 15, 1763.

END OF FIRST VOLUME.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

NOTE A TO PAGE 19.

TRADUCTION D'UN SYSTÈME PRÉSENTÉ À S.M.I. PAR LE GRAND CHANCELIER, COMTE DE BESTOUCHEF RUMIN, AU COMMENCEMENT DE L'ANNÉE 1744.[1]

Je prends la liberté de me jeter aux pieds de Votre Majesté Impériale et de lui présenter, avec le plus humble et le plus profond respect, mon sentiment sur la situation présente des affaires autant que je la conçois et autant que j'en puis juger selon mes foibles lumières, et j'espère de sa magnanimité et de la bonté suprême de son cœur, qui me sont toujours trop connues, qu'elle voudra regarder cette liberté d'un œil gracieux, puisqu'elle n'est fondée que sur les devoirs de la charge et de l'emploi dont elle a daigné me revêtir.[2]

Votre Majesté Impériale est notre Souveraine, le tout dépend abso'ument de ses ordres, et c'est à moi, comme à tous ses sujets, d'obéir aveuglement et avec la dernière et la plus humble résignation à tout ce qui peut lui plaire de nous ordonner et de nous prescrire. En un mot, sa haute volonté est une loi sacrée, pour moi et pour tous ceux qui ont le bonheur de vivre sous son sceptre. Mais aussi, Votre Majesté, j'aime la vérité, et elle veut, comme une grande princesse douée d'équité, de religion et de justice, que ses ministres ne doivent lui celer rien de ce qu'ils peuvent croire utile et convenable à sa gloire, son intérêt et au salut de son empire.

C'est pourquoi Votre Majesté Impériale permettra très gracieusement qu'à l'occasion des réquisitions que les Rois de Prusse et de Pologne ont faites presque à la fois des secours stipulés par les alliances où ces deux princes ont l' honneur de se trouver avec elle, j'aye l'honneur

[1] See, for this date, pp. 247 (note), 250, 251. It seems to have been Bestucheff's custom to give expression to his political views in this form for the benefit of the Czarina Elizabeth, for a reference to some such *système* occurs in Woronzow's *Memoirs*, and Rambaud also mentions one of the year 1753. See *Histoire de la Russie*, p. 442.

[2] Bestucheff was appointed Grand Chancellor, July 15, 1744.

de lui exposer, en qualité de son ministre et sur ma conscience, les considérations suivantes, et cela par écrit, parce que d'un côté je crois pouvoir m'expliquer mieux et plus clairement par écrit que de bouche et pour que cela serve un jour à me justifier, et parce que d'un autre côté il a plu à V.M.I. d'ordonner, il y a peu de jours, lorsque le Vice-Chancelier [1] et moi fûmes à Peterhof, afin de faire nos très humbles rapports sur les dites réquisitions, que nous devions examiner et approfondir encore de quel côté de ces deux princes se trouvoit la justice et le bon droit de leurs demandes.

Ainsi ces considérations-ci contiendront mon sentiment à cet égard et sur ce qui paroît en même tems juste, glorieux, utile et nécessaire à faire en général dans les conjonctures présentes, qui en vérité sont des plus critiques—le tout selon le peu de talens et de lumières que Dieu m'a donné et que l'expérience n'a que trop confirmé—au reste, sans passion ou partialité ni pour favoriser l'un ou pour contrarier l'autre, simplement et naturellement, et comme je compte d'en pouvoir répondre devant Dieu, V.M. et tout le monde, sauf pourtant meilleur avis, et soumettant au reste mes sentimens à la décision et à la haute pénétration de V. M. I.

Pour procéder avec plus d'ordre et de solidité, V.M.I. voudra agréer qu'avant que d'en venir au détail des susdites réquisitions j'établisse ici comme une espèce de système général qui puisse servir de base au reste, en examinant auparavant l'utilité et la nécessité des alliances en général et de celles que V.M.I. a actuellement en particulier.

C'est une vérité connue de tout tems que pas une Puissance au monde ne peut subsister sans des alliances, aussi toutes les nations de l'univers en sont-elles convaincues ; car tout comme le principe et le fondement du bonheur de la société humaine, même des plus simples particuliers, consistent dans la bonne foi, l'amitié et l'assistance mutuelle, tout ainsi le bonheur et la conservation des princes et des grandes Puissances dépendent également de la bonne foi, de l'amitié et de l'assistance mutuelle, qui en sont comme les pivots. Plus un prince tient religieusement ses alliances, ses engagemens, sa parole, plus il gagne du crédit, du respect et du pouvoir, plus il s'attache ses alliés et se concilie leur amitié réciproque. L'histoire de tant de siècles, de tous les pays, empires et royaumes le prouve.

V. M. I. a plusieurs alliances, engagemens et traités de paix. Elle en a trouvés à son glorieux avènement au trône, et elle en a contractés et renouvelés pendant l'heureux cours de son règne.

Quant aux premières, V.M.I. les a généralement confirmées et constatées par les lettres de notification qu'elle a écrites, à son avènement au trône, aux différentes Puissances avec lesquelles V.M.I. et son

[1] Michel Ilarionovitch Woronzow.

Empire étoient en relation parce qu'elle a assuré à ces diverses Cours et Puissances qu'elle vouloit continuer à vivre avec elles en paix, bonne harmonie, amitié et alliance, selon que l'une ou l'autre subsistoit ; ainsi toute la paix avec la Porte Ottomane ne subsiste-t-elle que sur la bonne foi de ces assurances.

Entre les alliances que V.M.I. a confirmées et renouvelées spécialement pendant son glorieux règne la première a été celle avec le Roi de la Grande Bretagne. C'est la plus ancienne que cet Empire ait eue avec les Puissances européennes ; déjà du tems de Jean Wasilowitz [1] on en a reconnu l'utilité parce qu'elle est fondée sur la sûreté réciproque des deux couronnes contre la Suède, le Danemarck, la Prusse, la Pologne, etc., sur le bien mutuel des deux États et sur le commerce important que la nation Britannique fait dans cet Empire, qui porte un revenu considérable a V.M.I., et qui procure le débit de la plus grande partie des produits de ses pays. Ce digne père de V.M.I., Pierre I. de glorieuse mémoire, qui, comme tout le monde est obligé de l'avouer, a parfaitement su et connu ses intérêts et ceux de son Empire, étoit si persuadé de la nécessité et de l'utilité d'une constante alliance avec l'Angleterre que lorsqu'il n'étoit pas même trop content pendant quelque tems du feu Roi d'Angleterre George I.,[2] et cela uniquement par rapport aux affaires de Mecklenbourg, dans lesquelles le dit Roi en qualité d'Electeur d'Hanovre n'agissoit pas selon ses vues, il ne vouloit pourtant jamais que son mécontentement s'étendît le moins du monde sur la connexion, l'amitié et l'alliance avec l'Angleterre, qu'il vouloit toujours ménager et conserver avec attention. Aussi par les mêmes raisons avoit-on déjà négocié une alliance avec la dite couronne sous le règne de l'Impératrice Anna,[3] et si enfin le traité même a été porté à sa perfection sous le règne de V.M I., ce qui s'est fait sous des conditions plus avantageuses que le projet n'en avoit été auparavant, c'est parce que les susdites raisons, principes et intérêts sont encore toujours les mêmes.

La seconde alliance que V.M.I. a contracté sous son règne est avec le Roi de Prusse,[4] très-utile aussi, je l'avoue, mais qui le seroit infiniment davantage si l'expérience nous auroit montré que ce prince fut plus fidèle à sa parole et à ses engagemens. V.M.I. voudra se ressouvenir très gracieusement que lorsque ce Roi en pressa la conclusion avec empressement, je n'y ai conseillé ou insisté qu'autant que cette alliance

[1] 1533–1584.

[2] See, for this, 'Notes on the Diplomatic Relations between England and Russia,' etc., in vol. xiv. N.S. of the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*.

[3] The treaty finally concluded in December 1742 had been signed and ratified (except for one article) on April 3, 1741, before the accession of Elizabeth. See Instructions to Wych, January 29, 174½; R.O. *Russia*, vol. xl.

[4] That of March 1743. See p. 13 and note.

pouvoit alors servir en tout cas d'un plus grand contre-poids contre la Suède, avec laquelle nous étions encore en guerre.

Mais à présent, et depuis que le Roi de Prusse a gagné une si grande connexion et influence dans ce dernier royaume par le mariage de sa sœur avec le Prince successeur, mariage que j'ai toujours appréhendé au point que j'ai pris la liberté d'exposer librement mes craintes à cet égard à V.M.I. même, et je doute que ce Prince voulût jamais nous être utile en cas que nous eussions de démêlés avec la Suède. Au contraire, on a raison de craindre plutôt, comme V.M.I. en est informé sans cela, que la connexion et l'influence de ce Prince ambitieux et de sa sœur en Suède ne produisent un jour des effets directement opposés aux intérêts de V.M.I., si on n'y met pas bientôt des bornes, vu qu'actuellement il a gagné déjà plus de pouvoir et de crédit dans ce royaume par un parti supérieur au nôtre que nous n'en avons jamais eu, tout comme il a fait encore en Pologne et ailleurs où il entretient et fomente des liaisons et des correspondances secrètes qui ne sont rien moins que conformes aux intérêts de V.M.I. et de son Empire, et qui pourroient un jour nous devenir fatales si on n'y prend pas extrêmement garde.

La troisième alliance que V.M.I. a renouvelée et confirmée spécialement pendant son règne est celle avec le Roi de Pologne, Electeur de Saxe.[1] L'utilité de celle-ci a été reconnue de tout tems tant par rapport à la sûreté réciproque contre la Prusse, contre la Porte Ottomane et contre la Suède, etc., que pour l'influence qu'un Roi de Pologne, qui est en même tems Electeur de Saxe, a dans les affaires générales d'Allemagne comme un des premiers entre les Electeurs séculiers et comme Vicaire de l'Empire d'Allemagne pendant les Interrègnes.

C'est pourquoi Pierre I., de mémoire immortelle, a toujours voulu et recommandé de s'attacher le plus qu'on pourroit la Maison de Saxe d'un côté, afin que les Rois de Pologne de cette Maison concurrussent à contenir la République de Pologne même, et d'un autre coté pour y trouver un contre-poids à balancer la puissance de la Maison de Brandenburg, qui commençoit déjà à se rendre extrêmement formidable du tems de ce grand Empereur, et qui lui faisoit faire des réflexions très-sérieuses sur l'accroissement des conquêtes, du pouvoir, des forces et des trésors de Prusse. Enfin Pierre I. étoit si convaincu qu'il étoit nécessaire d'avoir un Prince de la Maison de Saxe sur le trône de Pologne et d'être toujours uni avec lui que lorsqu'en 1706 le feu Roi de Pologne Auguste II.[2] avoit été obligé, par la force des

[1] February 4, 1744. An earlier alliance of 1733 was renewed, and a secret article promised help from Russia against Prussia. The treaty was Bestucheff's own work. See Koch, *Histoire des Traités*, ii. 344.

[2] Augustus II., 1697-1733; Augustus III., 1733-1763.

armes victorieuses des Suédois et par d'autres circonstances, à renoncer pour quelque tems à l'alliance du dit Empereur et même d'abdiquer la couronne de Pologne, il ne voulut se tranquilliser que jusqu'à ce que le même Roi avoit remonté sur le trône de ce royaume, et si depuis, l'Impératrice Anne a fait des efforts si considérables pour remettre et affermir encore l'Electeur de Saxe, son fils, sur le trône, ce n'est pas qu'elle y ait été portée par un pur et simple mouvement d'amitié pour ce Prince, mais plutôt pour son propre intérêt et pour celui de son Empire, et puisque les Princes de cette Maison se sont attachés avec fermeté et constance aux intérêts de la Russie unis et combinés avec les leurs.[1]

Après avoir prouvé par principes la nécessité et l'utilité des alliances en général, et de celles en particulier qui ont été spécialement renouvelées sous le règne de S.M.I., je dois ne pas cacher que bien loin que V.M.I. ait lieu de regretter les engagemens qu'elle a pris, V.M.I. ne peut qu'être très-satisfaite et rendre grâces au Tout-Puissant de ce que dans un tems et des conjonctures si épineuses que les présentes, où presque toute l'Europe et une grande partie de l'Asie sont plongées dans des guerres affreuses, elle jouit heureusement et pour le salut de ses peuples d'une profonde paix et tranquillité dans son Empire.

Par le même, V.M.I. se trouve non seulement pas dans le triste cas d'avoir besoin de demander l'assistance et les secours de quelque autre Puissance, mais elle se voit au contraire dans le cas glorieux d'être recherchée et sollicitée de toutes parts et de toute l'Europe, qui a les yeux tournés sur V.M I. pour voir de quelle manière il lui plaira enfin d'agir dans des conjonctures pareilles, où elle est capable de faire pencher la balance du côté où elle voudra se tourner, et où elle peut acquérir par une heureuse et ferme résolution, digne de sa grandeur, la gloire immortelle d'arrêter et de faire finir promptement le cours d'une guerre funeste par le parti qu'elle choisira.

De ne pas vouloir du tout participer aux conjonctures présentes, qui semblent n'exister que pour inviter V.M.I. à y prendre part avec gloire, c'est ce qui me paroît ne pas être convenable ni même possible, et peut-être dangereux pour l'avenir.

Cela ne me paroît pas convenable et tout-à-fait éloigné des intentions de V.M.I., parce que cela seroit opposé et contraire à la déclaration qu'il lui a plu de faire faire par ses Ministres aux Cours étrangères il y a environ un an. Cette déclaration porte que l'intention de V.M.I., etc. (*inseratur declaratio*).[2] Cela me paroît d'autant plus impossible

[1] Simon Romanovitch Woronzow also points out in his Memoirs that it had been the ancient policy of Russia to maintain Poland in her *status quo*. In his view it was a foreign, not a Russian, monarch who put an end to that state of things.

[2] This declaration has not been preserved.

qu'un simple particulier ne laisseroit pas que de s'intéresser ou pour l'un ou pour l'autre de ses égaux qui auroient quelque différend ensemble, selon qu'il croiroit trouver la justice d'un côté ou de l'autre, ou selon qu'il s'y sentiroit porter par amitié ou par obligation.

Et enfin cela me paroîtroit dangereux pour l'avenir parce qu'on risqueroit de perdre l'amitié et la considération de toutes les Puissances et Alliés, au point que si un jour cet Empire auroit besoin de leur assistance ils feroient alors tout aussi peu pour nous que nous aurions fait pour eux.

En conséquence de tout ceci il semble qu'il faudra prendre quelque parti, et pour mon particulier je suis très-persuadé qu'il faudra s'y résoudre tôt ou tard, et que même le plutôt sera le meilleur ; aussi M. le Vice-Chancelier Comte de Woronzow l'a-t-il déjà très-bien senti, et reconnu la vérité de ce principe dans son sentiment signé de sa main et donné à V.M.I. l'année passée, car enfin en saine et bonne politique il est impossible que les grands Princes puissent être indifféremment amis de tout le monde. Un simple particulier qui veut observer les devoirs de la probité et de la droiture ne le sauroit s'il ne veut pas risquer de perdre la confiance et l'estime des uns et des autres de ses égaux, et les princes le peuvent encore moins.

S'il faut donc participer aux conjonctures, il ne s'agit que de déterminer la manière et la façon de le faire, et il me paroît qu'alors il n'y a rien de plus naturel et de plus juste que de se déclarer en faveur de ses anciens amis qui sans cela ont le bon droit de leur côté au lieu de vouloir courir risque de prouver et d'essayer premièrement, peut-être même avec danger, l'amitié de quelques nouveaux amis ; et comme les anciens amis de cet Empire sont déjà, et seront toujours par la situation de leurs pays, les alliés les plus naturels de V.M.I., on leur pourra d'autant moins manquer de foi que sans cela on se mettroit dans le hasard d'avoir rebuté et dégoûté tout à la fois plusieurs grandes Puissances dont l'amitié a été reconnue en plus d'une occasion, et de n'avoir tout au plus gagné au change que de faux amis qui jusqu'ici ne nous ont voulu que du mal en toutes rencontres, si non ouvertement, du moins en secret, par des intrigues et des négociations clandestines à d'autres Cours de l'Europe et en Turquie.

Si je dis qu'il me paroît juste, convenable et glorieux que V.M.I. participe aux conjonctures présentes, je ne prétends point conseiller par là de prendre directement part à la guerre et d'agir offensivement contre quelque Puissance ; au contraire, c'est ce que je déconseillerois ; plutôt mon sentiment est seulement que l'intérêt et l'honneur de V.M.I. et la sûreté de son Empire pour l'avenir demandent qu'elle remplisse les engagemens de ces traités dont le cas existe présentement, tout comme la République d'Hollande remplisse ses engagemens envers l'Angleterre et la Reine d'Hongrie, en leur fournissant les secours stipulés en troupes et en argent, sans que pour cela elle prenne

directement part à la guerre et sans qu'elle soit censée autrement que comme auxiliaire.

Il ne resteroit donc qu'à examiner si le cas des traités que les Rois de la Grande Bretagne, de Pologne et de Prusse ont fait réclamer, existe effectivement, et de quel côté se trouve la justice entre les réquisitions des deux dernières Puissances, et c'est ce je tâcherai de faire le plus succinctement qu'il sera possible.

V.M.I. a déjà reconnu le cas de l'alliance avec l'Angleterre par la réponse donnée au mois d'août de l'année passée au Lord Tirawley,[1] et le Roi de la Grande Bretagne auroit déjà pu faire la réquisition pour la marche du secours accordé ; mais si ce Prince ne l'a pas fait encore, la raison de ce délai ne paroît se fonder que sur les espérances qu'il semble avoir mis sur le succès des négociations entamées de sa part et de celle de ses alliés auprès de V.M.I. ; et si, vu les incidents survenus que V.M.I. n'ignore point, cette négociation (sur laquelle, avec sa très-gracieuse permission, je me réserve d'exposer mes pensées en peu de mots à la fin de cet écrit) ne répondroit peut-être pas à ce que ce Prince et ses alliés peuvent avoir espéré, je suis presque tenté de croire que comme apparemment la saison seroit encore trop avancée, tout comme l'année passée, pour le transport d'un pareil corps de troupes, le Roi d'Angleterre pourroit bien prendre le parti de demander, en vertu du traité, au lieu de 12,000 hommes stipulés et accordés, la somme de 500,000 roubles à laquelle le dit corps auxiliaire y est évalué, l'option entre les troupes ou l'argent étant expressément stipulée dans ce traité, stipulation à laquelle après mûre délibération on s'est porté d'autant plus volontiers du côté de V.M.I. et de cet Empire, qui par une considération très bien fondée n'a eu en vue d'obtenir pour V.M.I. un secours en argent qui dans le cas d'une guerre lui seroit beaucoup plus avantageux, utile, et même peut-être nécessaire, que V.M.I. ne peut pas selon toute apparence manquer si facilement d'hommes et de troupes que d'argent ; et si, comme je ne le suppose que par simples conjectures, on demanderoit de la part du Roi d'Angleterre le secours en argent, cela seroit apparemment plus onéreux à V.M.I. que si elle lui donnoit les troupes, dont l'entretien coûteroit d'autant moins à V.M.I. que le traité avec l'Angleterre porte que le Roi de la Grande Bretagne leur doit fournir les étapes dès le moment qu'elles sont à sa disposition, sans faire mention que c'est un point qui mérite l'attention la plus sérieuse, et

[1] Lord Tyrawley, British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, 1744–1745. In September 1744 he reports that the Czarina was ready to fulfil the obligations of her treaty with England of 1742. This seems to fix the date of this document for the beginning of the year 1745 O.S., as Lord Tyrawley went to Russia only in February 1744 N.S. See also pp. 250 (and note), 251, and 19. (See Tyrawley's of September 25, 1744, Add. MS. 22,631, British Museum.)

que par plus d'une raison il vaut toujours mieux de donner de l'occupation aux troupes que de les laisser oisives, et qu'en les employant on les rend aguerries au lieu qu'elles s'amollissent et se gâtent quand elles ne le sont point. Cela est si vrai qu'il y a des princes qui par cette seule raison ont été bien aise d'occuper leurs troupes pour quelque tems.

Quant aux réquisitions que les Rois de Pologne et de Prusse [1] ont faites presque en même tems des secours stipulés par les alliances qu'ils ont avec V.M.I., il me semble que, sans entrer dans une longue discussion de ce qui a été allégué de leur côté pour démontrer l'existence des cas de leur alliance, on n'a qu'à faire un peu d'attention à un simple narré de ce qui s'est passé depuis l'invasion prussienne en Bohême pour sentir la différence extrême qu'il y a entre la nature de ces deux réquisitions et le fondement sur lequel elles sont appuyées.

Le Roi de Prusse jouissoit d'une profonde paix dans ses Etats. Il n'étoit ni inquiet ni menacé de personne, et possédoit, outre les anciens Etats, en pleine tranquillité, la Silesie, que la Reine d'Hongrie lui avoit cédée, cession très-importante, puisque, sans compter d'autres avantages qu'il en retire pour l'accroissement de ses forces militaires, ce pays lui porte au-delà de 5 à 6 millions d'écus de revenus, pays qui ne lui avoit été cédé pourtant que pour acheter la paix et dont la possession lui étoit garantie par V.M.I. et par d'autres Puissances respectables. Ce Roi s'étoit engagé par le 1er article du Traité de Breslau de garder une paix inviolable, de ne commettre ni de permettre à d'autre qu'il se commît aucune hostilité, secrètement ou publiquement, directement ou indirectement, contre la Reine d'Hongrie. Il étoit engagé en termes tous clairs par ce même article qu'il ne donneroit aucun secours aux ennemis de la Reine sous quelque prétexte que ce fût.

Malgré tout cela ce même Prince commence tout d'un coup à faire des armemens extraordinaires qui menaçoient d'une nouvelle rupture. Il alarma par là tous les voisins, leur assurant cependant qu'il n'entreprenoit rien contre eux ; les voisins, qui déjà connoissoient par expérience la valeur de pareilles assurances, se virent néanmoins dans la nécessité absolue de prendre en tout cas leurs précautions pour leur sûreté commune.

Entre ses voisins étoient principalement la Saxe et la Reine d'Hongrie ; ces deux Puissances étoient déjà alliées par le sang et par les traités et engagemens qu'elles avoient communiqués à V.M.I., et elles devoient appréhender par toute sorte de circonstances que le

[1] During the whole of the year 1744 Frederic was still claiming from Russia the help which had been stipulated for in the Treaty of 1743. See *Polit. Corr. Friedrich's*, vol. iii.

coup pourroit réjaillir sur elles, quoique de leur côté elles n'y avoient pas donné la moindre occasion. Par conséquence ces deux Puissances s'unissoient encore plus étroitement par une convention qui, si elle a été tenue en sûreté entre elles pendant un couple de mois, l'a dû être naturellement tant que les deux dites Puissances n'étoient pas encore assurées de science certaine où ces armemens aboutissoient, et si en effet elles en seroient l'objet, contre toute la foi des traités. La Saxe avoit d'autant plus d'intérêt à s'unir étroitement avec la Reine d'Hongrie, et de donner plus d'étendue à ses engagemens avec elle, qu'au défaut des enfans et héritiers dans la Maison d'Autriche toute la succession doit revenir à la Saxe.[1]

Enfin le Roi de Prusse leva tout d'un coup le masque en marchant une armée de plus de 100,000 hommes vers la Bohême,[2] et pour colorer et déguiser une pareille entreprise, que tout le monde ne pouvoit regarder que comme une infraction de paix honteuse et directement contraire à la teneur de la Paix de Breslau, il allégua pour prétexte de vouloir maintenir l'autorité de l'Empereur défunt ;[3] mais ce prétexte étoit faux, puisque personne n'avoit eu la pensée de disputer l'autorité de cet Empereur comme Empereur, et puisque la guerre que Charles VII. avoit faite n'étoit qu'une guerre purement domestique que ce dernier avoit commencée avec l'aide et sur l'instigation de la France, et qui ne regardait au reste que la Bavière et ses prétensions mal fondées sur la succession d'Autriche ; puisque si le Roi de Prusse n'auroit eu en vue que l'établissement de l'autorité de l'Empereur, il n'auroit pas eu la faire en Bohême, où il ne s'agissoit de rien moins que de cela et qui n'étoit pas le pays où elle auroit pu et dû être établie.

Les véritables motifs de l'invasion du Roi de Prusse en Bohême étoient donc les instigations et l'argent de la France, qui, pour se tirer mieux d'affaires et d'une guerre qu'elle même avoit injustement excitée en Allemagne, ne voyoit plus d'autre moyen d'arrêter le cours des progrès du Prince Charles de Lorraine en Alsace qu'en faisant faire une puissante diversion par le Roi de Prusse en Bohême.

L'humeur inquiète de ce Prince et son ambition de faire des nouvelles conquêtes et de s'agrandir aux dépens de ses voisins—c'est pourquoi il s'étoit fait stipuler, par un article secret de l'Union de Francfort, 3 ou 4 des meilleurs cercles ou provinces de la Bohême, limitrophes de la Saxe.

Il est vrai que la Cour de Berlin n'a pas voulu avouer ce dernier point, mais il est vrai aussi qu'il ne laisse pas d'être assez probablement et même clairement démontré et prouvé.

[1] Augustus III. of Saxony had married a daughter of the Emperor Joseph I.

[2] In August 1744

[3] Charles VII. died January 20, 1745.

Le Roi de Prusse, après avoir rompu de cette façon la Paix de Breslau, dont V.M.I., tout comme le Roi d'Angleterre, qui avoit aidé à lui faire céder ce pays, étoient les garants, au lieu de faire marcher ses troupes en Bohême par ses propres pays, comme il auroit dû et pu le faire, força, malgré toute représentation et protestation, avec 70,000 hommes, le Roi de Pologne à lui accorder le passage par la Saxe sans en avoir donné avis à tems et par des réquisitions en forme. Cette façon de faire marcher des troupes par le territoire d'un tiers étoit contre tous les droits des gens en général, et particulièrement encore contre toutes les constitutions fondamentales d'Allemagne, et accompagnée de toute sorte d'excès et de violences, même des menaces de vouloir désarmer, en cas d'opposition, toute l'armée saxonne et de rendre la Saxe un désert.

Les troupes saxonnes, dispersées cy et là, comme partout ailleurs en tems de paix, dans leurs quartiers ordinaires, n'étoient pas à même de s'opposer par la force à la force et d'empêcher ce passage, que d'ailleurs le Roi de Pologne ne pouvoit ni devoit regarder que comme une hostilité, comme toute autre Puissance au monde l'auroit regardée également, et tout comme par le même fondement l'Impératrice Anne a allégué le passage des Tartares par les frontières de cet Empire pour un motif de guerre, dans son manifeste contre les Turcs même plusieurs années après qu'il avoit été fait.

Le Roi de Pologne, par modération, ne fit que s'en plaindre au Roi de Prusse et lui demander une juste satisfaction et dédommagement, et quoiqu'il n'obtint ni l'un ni l'autre pour lui, sa dignité, ses pays et sujets foulés, il fit néanmoins déclarer à Berlin que nonobstant les engagemens qu'il avoit avec la Reine d'Hongrie, qu'il ne vouloit et ne pouvoit se dispenser de remplir, il garderoit une exacte neutralité pour ses pays de Saxe.

Cette neutralité a été acceptée en forme par le Roi de Prusse ; elle a été gardée exactement du côté de la Saxe par le Roi de Pologne, mais elle a été rompue plus d'une fois et de plus d'une manière du côté de la Prusse, entre autres par le second passage pris par force par la Lusace à la fin de l'année passée.[1]

Considère-t-on dans ces entrefaits la conduite du Roi de Pologne envers V.M.I., et celle du Roi de Prusse envers elle, on y trouvera une différence totale.

On trouve que, même avant que les desseins du dernier avoient encore éclaté, le Roi de Pologne s'est ouvert confidemment, selon qu'un bon et véritable allié le doit faire, de toutes ses appréhensions à V.M.I. ; qu'il lui a demandé en tout cas son assistance et protection contre les entreprises de ce voisin, qui n'aboutiroient pas à moins qu'au renversement

[1] November-December 1744. See Carlyle's *Fredcrick the Great*, Book xv. chap. iv.

et au bouleversement entier de la Maison d'Autriche, entreprises qui par conséquent ne pouvoient et ne peuvent encore être indifférentes à aucune Puissance de l'Europe telle qu'elle soit, et qui devoient naturellement être encore moins indifférentes à la Saxe, qui, par le droit de succession éventuelle aux pais d'Autriche, y devoit prendre un intérêt infiniment plus pressant, outre que la Saxe couroit indubitablement risque d'être également envahie aussitôt que le Roi de Prusse auroit poussé à bout la Reine d'Hongrie.

On trouvera de plus que le Roi de Pologne, qui déjà avoit fait communiquer longtems auparavant à V.M.I. son alliance avec la Cour de Vienne, conclue l'année 1743, et que V.M. avoit approuvée, mettant toute sa confiance dans sa justice reconnue, a communiqué tout de suite, par ses Ministres, le Baron de Gersdorf[1] à Moscou et par le Comte de Fleming à Kiowie,[2] qu'en vertu de ses engagemens ultérieurs il se verroit dans la nécessité d'assister son allié, ce que V.M.I. n'a pas désapprouvé ; au contraire, elle fit plutôt espérer son assistance et son secours avec toutes ses forces au Roi de Pologne, en cas que S.M. Prussienne se porta à enfreindre la neutralité de la Saxe ou à entreprendre quelque chose contre la tranquillité en Pologne, témoin diverses lettres de V.M.I. écrites au Roi de Pologne, entre autres celle du 26 Juillet, 1744, et surtout différentes déclarations faites à ce sujet par ordre de V.M.I., tant à Dresde qu'ici, et principalement celle qui a été faite au Baron de Mardefeld à Moscou l'année passée.

Mais quelle conduite le Roi de Prusse a-t-il tenue dans toute cette affaire et envers V.M.I. et envers le Roi de Pologne ? Quoiqu'il soit aussi allié à V.M.I., il n'a rien communiqué de ses prétendus engagemens avec l'Empereur défunt sous prétexte desquels il a fait marcher pourtant une armée de 100,000 hommes, qu'après coup, ni de ses desseins que jusqu'à ce qu'il étoit déjà effectivement entré en Bohême et avoit commencé par envahir ce pays d'un autre côté ; et malgré les exhortations de V.M.I. et les assurances réitérées qu'il à fait donner ici de ne vouloir rien entreprendre contre les Etats héréditaires du Roi de Pologne, ni contre la tranquillité dans le Royaume de Pologne, il n'a pas cessé non seulement de menacer la Saxe, de la vouloir ruiner totalement et de la pervertir dans un désert, mais il a effectivement enfreint plus d'une fois la neutralité de la Saxe, qu'il avoit formellement acceptée, et cela comme par mépris et indifférence pour tout ce qui lui a été représenté de la part de V.M.I. : au moins tout cela n'a pas montré beaucoup d'attention et de déférence pour les

[1] Saxon representative at St. Petersburg. The object of this mission was to persuade Elizabeth to declare in favour of the Austrians, with whom Saxony was allied. See *Recueil des Instructions : Russie*, i. 428. The Comte de Fleming was then First Minister in Saxony.

[2] Kiowie, *i.e.* Kiow or Kieff.

conseils et les souhaits d'une amie aussi respectable que doit être V.M.I. ; et n'a-t-il pas, malgré toutes assurances, assemblé un corps considérable de troupes près de Magdebourg, uniquement, selon son propre aveu et ses menaces, pour faire une invasion dans les pays de la Saxe ? Enfin, les ordres qu'il a donnés à Cagnoni, son Ministre à Dresde, de quitter tout d'un coup cette Cour sans prendre congé, de même celles par où il a obligé le Résident de Saxe à Breslau de se retirer en 24 heures de tems en Pologne, n'indiquent ils pas assez son intention de rompre ouvertement avec le Roi de Pologne ? Sans quoi il n'auroit pas voulu en agir ainsi, vu que la France même, qui peut-être auroit eu plus de raison d'être piquée contre la Hollande que le Roi de Prusse n'en a de l'être contre la Saxe, en agit plus équitablement et avec plus de ménagemens et de retenue en laissant tranquillement et son Ministre en Hollande et celui de cette République à Paris. Et n'est-il pas évident que ses desseins ne peuvent aboutir que trop réellement à vouloir détruire et anéantir la Saxe à la première occasion et opportunité qu'il en trouvera, puisqu'actuellement il anime, excite et sollicite la France de se concerter avec lui sur la marche d'un corps de plus de 20,000 hommes de troupes françoises pour entrer par la Thuringue du côté d'Erfurth dans la Saxe pour mettre celle ci absolument entre deux feux ? Outre tout ceci je ne sçai si les démarches du Roi de Prusse en Pologne pendant la Diète passée à Grodno,[1] où ses Ministres, le Baron de Wallenrodt et son Résident Hofmann, sur ses ordres ont fait tout leur possible pour rompre la Diète par leurs machinations, trames et intrigues clandestines, qui n'ont pas peu contribué à faire échouer aussi les vues salutaires de V.M.I. à cette Diète à l'egard des Eglises des Grecs en Pologne et en Lithuanie, pour lesquelles tout paroissoit d'ailleurs si bien disposé, ont été moins préjudiciables aux intérêts et aux vues de V.M.I. qu' à ceux du Roi de Pologne. Les correspondances et les connexions secrètes qu'il continue à entretenir encore actuellement dans ce pays avec plusieurs Grands du Royaume connus pour être d'un esprit turbulent, uniquement pour exciter des méfiances contre leur légitime Roi et de leur inspirer des soupçons envenimés et faux, sont autant de pas contraires à l'amitié et à l'attention qu'il devroit avoir pour V.M.I. et ses intérêts, et il est certain que le maintien de la tranquillité en Pologne est, et doit être toujours, un objet des soins les plus naturels et les plus indispensables de V.M.I. pour la sûreté de son Empire, parce que s'il arrivoit la moindre altération en Pologne il y faudroit accourir sans pouvoir s'en dispenser un moment, à moins de risquer qu'un feu pareil dans le voisinage n'embrase cet Empire.

En faisant attention à tout ceci, et à la manière dont le Roi de

[1] The Diet of Grodno was in September 1744. See *Recueil des Instructions : Russie*, i. 442 and 451.

Prusse en a usé à l'égard de la médiation de V.M.I., qu'il avoit fait semblant de désirer si ardemment et qu'il a refusée avec une manière de mépris, à ses démarches à la Porte Ottomane, et à tant d'autres points encore, que je passe pour n'être pas trop prolixe, et si l'on compare ses démarches avec celles du Roi de Pologne : si enfin on considère les marques réelles que ce dernier a tâché de donner en toute occasion de son amitié véritable et sans fard, et de ses attentions pour V.M.I. et pour tout ce qui regarde ses intérêts, celui de son successeur et de cet Empire, on trouve aisément que la bonne foi, la justice et le droit sont du côté du Roi de Pologne, outre que l'intérêt de V.M.I., ses engagemens et ses promesses, parlent également en sa faveur.

Si par tout ce que j'ai pris la liberté de représenter très-respectueusement V.M.I. trouvât donc, comme j'ose m'en flatter, elle-même qu'il soit juste qu'elle remplisse ce que la foi des traités exige, il sera très-facile de se résoudre aussi sur ce qui conviendroit le mieux de faire par rapport aux offres et propositions que les Puissances Maritimes ont si amiablement faites,[1] offres qui me semblent d'autant plus avantageuses qu'elles faciliteront effectivement à V.M.I. les moyens de satisfaire sans incommodité à ce que sa gloire et son honneur, si bien établis dans le monde, paroissent lui demander pour rendre par là son nom immortel et si digne du grand Pierre, et offres d'autant moins rejetables que si les ambassadeurs et ministres des Cours alliées qui ont fait les dites propositions se sont pour leur personnel précipités et égarés peut-être par trop de vivacité et d'empressement dans la manière de traiter, de convenir et de s'expliquer à cet égard,[2] ayant par là presque failli de gâter les affaires de leurs Cours, ces dernières ne sauroient souffrir de la faute personnelle de leurs Ministres et y être confondues après qu'elles ont reconnu elles-mêmes le tort que leurs Ministres avoient eu en cela.

Enfin ce sont là mes sentimens selon que je comprends les choses. C'est de quoi Dieu est mon témoin, mais je ne prétends jamais les donner pour règles, et c'est après tout, parce qu'il faut enfin prendre quelque parti, à la haute pénétration et sagesse de V.M.I. de décider souverainement, et à moi et à tous ses sujets d'y souscrire et faire exécuter ce que lui plaira d'ordonner très-gracieusement, et c'est ce que je ferai toujours avec la dernière soumission et résignation.

[1] *I.e.* of a subsidy. A scheme of an alliance between Russia, England, Holland, and Poland against Prussia was now a part of England's Continental policy. See Tyrawley's Despatch, November 8, 1744. R.O. *Russia*, vol. xlv. By Article 8 of the projected alliance two million roubles were to be paid by the Maritime Powers to Russia while the war with Prussia lasted.

[2] This possibly refers to the scheme of partition of the King of Prussia's dominions. See Tyrawley's Despatch, August 26, 1744; R.O. *Russia*, vol. xlvi.

NOTE B TO PAGE 51.

Précis des Instructions données par la Dépêche de S.E. le Comte de Bute à M. le Chevalier Yorke, 12 Jan. 1762.

À cette occasion importante (c'est-à-dire, de la publication du Pacte de Famille entre la France et l'Espagne et du danger qui menace le Royaume de Portugal) le Roi serait bien aise que votre Excellence pût trouver quelque canal convenable pour sonder les sentiments de la Cour de Vienne, afin que Sa Majesté sache s'il y a lieu d'espérer de voir revivre dans l'esprit de l'Impératrice les craintes bien fondées que tous ses augustes prédécesseurs ont conçues de la puissance énorme et dangereuse de la Maison de Bourbon et de l'invasion dont le Portugal est menacé, aussi bien que des dangers qui sont justement à craindre pour ses propres États en Italie, ou bien si elle ne serait pas capable de se laisser flatter de l'espérance de quelque acquisition ultérieure *dans ces quartiers*, au cas qu'elle resolût à se joindre aux Puissances qui pourraient vouloir opposer les projets pernicieux de la France et de l'Espagne.

(Add. MS. 6,820, British Museum.)

NOTE C TO PAGE 227

GENERAL IMPORTS OF THE BRITTISH FACTORY IN ST. PETERSBURG, ANNO 1763

Sugar, Refin'd	poods[1]	8,496		roubles[2]	60,000
„ Raw	„	11,706		„	40,600
Brimstone	„	620		„	880
Indigo	„	1,729		„	89,795
Cocheneal	„	43	35 lb.	„	6,312
Beaverskins	„	10,512		„	40,637
Printed Cotton	„	432		„	1,520
Seville Oil	„	2,470		„	7,788
Coffea	„	583		„	4,154
Lead	„	13,486		„	18,620
Red Lead	„	262		„	453
Buxton Ale	„	615		„	18,907
Logwood	„	29,286		„	36,360
Spelten[3]	„	120		„	324
Pewter	„	893		„	6,588
Tinn	„	9,920		„	61,354
Allum	„	4,400		„	7,592
Bottles	„	281,100		„	8,923
Cloth Lists	bales	34		„	4,360
Dantzic Brandy	cases	46		„	2,455
Wine	casks	224		„	8,425
Rum	„	14		„	1,300
Shalloons	ars.[4]	351,950		„	100,610
Cloth	„	311,490		„	236,540
Flennels	„	35,245		„	11,675
Stockings	doz.	546		„	5,748
Stuffs	pieces	4,580		„	53,120
Cotton Velvet	poods	193		„	14,408
Mahogony Ware, Clocks, &c.				„	10,565
Herring	casks	1,445		„	4,728
Steel	poods	100		„	625
Hardware				„	35,120
Sundry Small Articles				„	9,514
				Roubles	910,000

[1] A pood = 40 pounds.

[2] A rouble may be estimated at 4*s.* during the greater part of the reign of Catherine II. See Tooke's *Russian Empire*, iii. 475.

[3] Spelten or spelter, the commercial name for zinc.

[4] An arschine = 28 English inches.

General Exports by the British Factory in St. Petersburg, Anno 1763

Iron	poods	777,657		roubles	530,238
Hemp	„	751,810		„	1,089,484
Flax	„	179,056		„	415,265
Hemp Oil	„	10,088		„	11,850
Bees Wax	„	2,335		„	23,794
Linnen	ars.	3,373,073		„	155,925
Deals	.	.	.	„	6,779
Hides	poods	60,648		„	372,300
Saltpetre	„	24,000		„	110,847
Tallow	„	24,510		„	48,190
Hare Skins	pieces	211,755		„	29,320
Rhubarbe	poods	317	26¾ lb.	„	20,980
Bristles	„	10,351		„	59,135
Isinglass	„	2,946	34 „	„	125,015
Drillings	ars.	768,184		„	104,520
Fleams, Ravenduck, and Sailcloth	pieces	49,610		„	318,918
Horse Hair	poods	604		„	986
Tea	lb.	18	31 „	„	544
Candles	poods	179		„	510
Pottashes	„	2,035	16 „	„	3,820
Train Oil	„	3589	13 „	„	4,127
Caviar	„	2,273	34 „	„	7,947
Cordage	„	2,052		„	3,824
Castoreum	„	7	29¾ „	„	3,140
Matts	pieces	16,700		„	800
Masts	poods	33		„	6,174
Soap	„	510		„	1,031
Copper	„	933		„	7,092
Sundry Small Articles	.	.	.	„	2,445
			Total roub.		3,465,000

Spottiswoode & Co. Printers. New-street Square, London.

DUE SEP 6 '34
MAY 12 1942
BOOK DUE WID
AUG 23 1979